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ABSTRACT

This document, intended to provide Peace Corps volunteers with practical skills and underlying theory, includes 8 chapters, a 35-item bibliography, an index, and a user reaction form. Chapter 1 describes nonformal education (NFE) through an example from Togo. Chapter 2 provides three case studies of NFE in action: (1) finding space to make school uniforms in Swaziland, (2) improving child health care in Guatemala, and (3) talking about family planning in Indonesia. Chapter 3 provides a summary of eight adult learning theories. Chapter 4 provides techniques for assisting people in identifying their needs. Chapter 5 describes the essential steps in planning with people, including group techniques and recordkeeping methods. Evaluation issues, methods, and reporting are discussed in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 describes NFE techniques, such as icebreakers, warm-ups, role plays, open-ended problem dramas, critical incidents, demonstrations, field trips, lecturettes, panel discussions, small group discussions, fishbowl, and training of trainers. Chapter 8 describes developing NFE materials from low-cost local resources. Black and white illustrations are provided throughout the manual. (CML)

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Nonformal Education Manual

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United States Peace Corps

Nonformal Education Manual

by

Helen Fox

Editor: Linda Abrams

Prepared for Peace Corps by

The Institute for Training and Development

United States Peace Corps
Information Collection and Exchange
Manual M0042
December 1989

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KS -- Katherine Searle

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Preface

At the root of nonformal education (NFE) is a participatory, grassroots approach to encouraging self-sufficiency and to effecting change or learning of any kind. The final form and content of this manual are based on our belief that almost all Peace Corps Volunteers, regardless of their area of expertise or job title, are involved in nonformal education activities. This manual fills a real need by providing Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) working in all program areas with a hands-on approach to NFE based on situations actually encountered by other PCVs. Though projects illustrating NFE principles were drawn primarily from the experiences of Peace Corps Volunteers working in environmental, health and education projects, examples from small business, agriculture and urban development could be equally applicable and appropriate.

The Nonformal Education Manual is not meant to be the definitive treatise on NFE. It is intended as a useful, working document for Peace Corps Volunteers. We hope that you will find both practical skills and underlying theory which will be of use in your work and your life as a PCV, and that the manual will encourage you to dig in and get your hands dirty -- right up to your elbows. If you are interested in learning more about nonformal education, education in general, or working with communities, numerous sources, many of which are available to PCVs through ICE, are listed at the back of the manual.

Please let us know what you think of this manual, how it has helped you in your work and what you would like to see added or changed. A feedback sheet is provided at the back of this book for you to tear out and send to us.

Many people have contributed to the Nonformal Education Manual. The first draft, on which this final version is based, was written by Bonnie Mullinix in collaboration with Marilyn Gillespie, David S. McCurry and Donald Graybill. Special thanks are due to: John Guevin, former Education Sector Specialist of the Office of Training and Program Support (OTAPS) and Maureen Delaney, former Director of ICE, for their work as editors of the first draft of this manual; Barbara Denman, former OTAPS Training Specialist and Acting Director of ICE, for her invaluable comments and editing on both the original and the final versions of the manual. Thanks also to the following people who read and offered their comments on the manual at various stages in its development. Their valuable insights helped us to ensure that a wide variety of perspectives were considered in the final version: Karen Blyth, Country Desk Officer for Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen; Rebecca Parks, Director of OTAPS' Program Support Division; Gail Wadsworth, ICE's Resource Development Specialist; Marla Handy, Coordinator of the Training Program at the Community College of Vermont; Traci Bair, Education Sector Technician; and RPCVs Terry O'Leary and Eric Burman.

We especially extend our thanks and congratulations to Linda Abrams and Helen Fox of the Institute for Training and Development, Inc., who were a pleasure to work with and who were able to apply the basic tenets of nonformal education in a manner that made the final version of this manual interesting, readable and enlightening.

Myrna Norris
Education Sector Specialist

David Wolfe
Director, Information Collection and Exchange

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Though writing must be done in solitude, in that solitude you become intimately connected with people: people from the past whose ideas helped shape your own, people in the present who react to your words and send them back to you with scribbled comments or lovely designs to illustrate them, and people in the future -- the readers -- who can only be imagined. I am richer for the summer I spent in solitude, for I am now bound more strongly to you the readers, and to ...

Writers Bonnie Mullinix and Dave McCurry whose ideas and words are a part of this manual, and Marilyn Gillespie and Donald Graybill who contributed to its earlier incarnations

Peace Corps Togo Staff especially Tchao Bamazé, Ayélé Foly and Damas Kwajovie who taught me about Togo and inspired me with their living commitment to NFE values

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Artists Mansour Fakih and Katharine Searle whose skill as NFE trainers informed their artwork

And to all my colleagues at the Institute for Training and Development and at the Center for International Education at the University of Massachusetts, whose ideals are the soul of this manual.

Thanks friends,

Helen Fox
Amherst, 1989

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS NONFORMAL EDUCATION?

The day after Chris arrived in Togo to begin pre-service training, he and a half dozen others who weren't suffering too acutely from jet lag piled into a taxi and headed to the Grand Marché, the huge, jam-packed African market. Peace Corps staff had just given them their first assignment in cross-cultural training: Go to the market, buy something, and see what you can learn.

His pockets full of new currency, his head spinning with the unfamiliar smells of spicy street food and the sudden, sharp cries of market vendors, Chris looked around excitedly for something to buy.

His eyes fell on a table-full of small daggers with leather handles, inlaid with sparkling crystal. "Glass, probably," he thought to himself. Still, they were nicely made, and certainly unusual. "How much?" he asked, straining to remember his few words of college French.

The old street vendor eyed him, a half-smile on his face. "Seven thousand," he said in French. Chris looked confused. Had he said "thousand" or "hundred?" Now seven hundred would be, let's see ... well, less than three dollars anyway. But thousand...?

"Seven," the old man repeated again, holding up seven fingers and grinning at Chris.

"Yes, yes, seven," said Chris, nodding vigorously. "I understand the seven," he said in English. "It's the hundred ... or thousand ..."

The old man eyed Chris's backpack, his khaki bush shorts, his new canteen. "Peace Corps?" he asked, sympathetically.

"Yes, yes!" nodded Chris, delighted to have made a friend so quickly.

"I say seven," the old man said in English, "You say five." "Then I say, no, no. That's how is the African market."

Chris grinned. "OK, five," he said.

The old man laughed, delighted. "No, no!" he said in mock protest. "This knife is good quality. You insult me. Seven is my lowest price."

"Six then," said Chris, forgetting completely, by now, about his confusion between hundreds and thousands.

"Since you're my first customer, six it is," said the old man, helping a startled Chris count out twenty dollars worth of new currency.

As he handed Chris the small dagger wrapped in newspaper, the old man beckoned him to come closer. "Next time," he whispered conspiratorially, "next time you cut the price in half when you make your first offer."

* * *

Chris has just learned something rather differently than he was used to learning in school. He was the loser in the bargaining, yes, but if he listens to the old man's advice, he will save himself a lot more money in the weeks ahead than the few dollars he lost on this little transaction. His learning is likely to stick, because finding out how to bargain was a real-life need, something he learned at the moment...or almost the moment...he needed to know it.

While the old man had his own interests at heart, he also had a lively sense of the interests of his customer. He could have easily pocketed Chris's seven thousand and gone away laughing at the guillibility of American youth.

But he didn't do this, nor did he go out of his way to make sure Chris got the best price, the way he might have treated a child or perhaps someone whose intelligence he did not respect.

This balance between sympathy and self-interest created a kind of equality between seller and buyer, old hand and ignorant foreigner, teacher and learner. It was a far cry from lectures and exams, from the world of required courses and professional teachers that Chris had known. Was this nonformal education? Was this what Chris is supposed to practice in his Peace Corps service with people in developing countries?

* * *

In a way, yes. Chris had come to the market with the purpose of learning something from experience. He hadn't expected that the old vendor would take him under his wing, but when he did, Chris understood immediately that he could learn something, and agreed to give it a try.

He learned actively, by experiencing a real situation, by having to think and solve a real problem. He was allowed to make his own mistakes, to take charge of his own learning. But he wasn't left entirely on his own, either; the vendor gave him help when he needed it, and then let him in on some crucial information that he could use next time.

And although the game of the marketplace had a twist on it that Chris wasn't about to play on people in his village, this learning experience had many of the elements of nonformal education that he would soon learn about in training.

Nonformal education (NFE) is out-of school learning that is planned and agreed upon by both facilitator and participants.

- **participants are active; they solve problems, work with their hands, think creatively**
- **the learning is practical, flexible, and based on the real needs of the participants**
- **the purpose of NFE is to improve the life of the individual or community, rather than to teach isolated skills or knowledge**
- **NFE emphasizes trust and respect while encouraging questioning and reflection**

NFE seems new to Chris, who has spent most of his life in the formal school system. But nonformal education has been going on for centuries in traditional societies. In West African villages and towns, as in early America, young people are still apprenticed to local blacksmiths, carpenters, seamstresses and tailors to learn a trade through first-hand experience.

In societies as diverse as Sri Lanka, Ghana and Guatemala, clan and village leaders respected for their age and hereditary status pass on information about agricultural practices, traditional birth attendants educate new mothers in family planning techniques and religious leaders impart wisdom through parables, riddles, and the influence of their own personal virtue.

Through dance and song and oral narrative, through puppet theater and play acting, through one-to-one teaching and group facilitation, people all over the world have used nonformal education methods to pass on traditional knowledge and ensure that each new generation learns the wisdom, harmony and stability of the old.

But as the world grows closer together, as consumer goods, modern medicine and even television penetrate the remotest areas, as the population skyrockets and people leave overworked land to find new lives in the cities, traditional solutions no longer serve people as they did in the past.

Ironically, the new, formal school systems, designed to bring the population quickly into the modern age, often have little to teach people about how to solve the most pressing problems of daily life. Schoolroom geography, for example, is of vital importance in teaching children about the world outside the village, but gives them no advice about what to do when the desert creeps closer and they must trudge further and further each day after school to find firewood.

Neither traditional education nor "book learning" can effectively meet the educational needs of developing nations. What people need now is a new method of learning that speaks to their real problems in a world that seems turned upside down.

While far from being a panacea, NFE has potential for helping people face these new challenges. For modern NFE is different from both formal education and traditional learning systems in several important ways:

* NFE helps people generate creative, new solutions to real-life problems.

As the world changes more and more rapidly, creative problem-solving works better than memorizing facts and learning rituals that no longer serve their purpose. This does not necessarily mean discarding or belittling important traditional knowledge. Some of the most creative solutions come from using traditional techniques and knowledge in new ways.

* NFE is carried out in an atmosphere of mutual respect and equality between teacher and learner.

Traditional systems are often based on strict hierarchies of age, sex, caste, class, inheritance; the haves and the have-nots, the knowledgeable and the ignorant. When the world was more stable, hierarchies were often important in ensuring that ancient knowledge and traditional decision-making systems did not get lost.

But in a changing world where people must think creatively and cooperate in new ways, where learners must take charge of their own learning, the teacher-learner dichotomy has been replaced by a more equitable arrangement, where participants and facilitator plan and carry out activities together.

- NFE comes from the people, rather than being taken to them.

Ideally, it is the people themselves who determine their own needs, set their own goals, decide how they want to learn, and carry out their own plans for the improvement of their own lives. The facilitator helps people do what they have decided to do, and, like the old market vendor, gets them over the rough spots when they need help the most.

When Chris arrived in West Africa, he was pretty sure what his job would be and how he would try to carry it out. He had come to work in a village-based forestry project, for the desert was encroaching on Northern Togo, and the people's need for firewood was destroying the last of the vegetation that kept the fragile soil from being blown away.

Chris saw his job as convincing the village people to plant new trees and use more fuel-efficient cookstoves. As a science major in college and an active environmentalist, he saw this as the most logical way to correct the problem. Just show people what was in their best interest, he thought, just teach them the scientific way, the small-is-beautiful way, and their lives would surely be easier.

Chris had the idea that he could set up classes in making solar cookstoves and take people on field trips to show them how to plant trees. After he improved his French and learned the local language, he could start right in showing people how to better their own lives.

"Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he will eat for a lifetime." Chris had been impressed by this slogan back in his hometown. In fact, the beauty and logic of it had attracted him to joining the Peace Corps in the first place. That's what development work was all about.

Or was it?

CHAPTER 2

NFE IN ACTION

* *How have Volunteers used NFE techniques and values to accomplish something worthwhile during their term of service?*

* *What are the essential elements that make Volunteers successful in their work?*

* *When conditions for practicing NFE are less than ideal, how do Volunteers make the necessary compromises and carry on anyway?*

GIVE A MAN
A FISH AND
HE WILL EAT
FOR A DAY

TEACH A MAN
TO FISH AND
HE WILL EAT
FOR A LIFETIME

"Teach a man to fish?" "Encourage a man to fish?" "Persuade a man that fishing is in his best interest?" As Chris learned more about NFE philosophy, he wondered about revising the slogan that had so attracted him to development work.

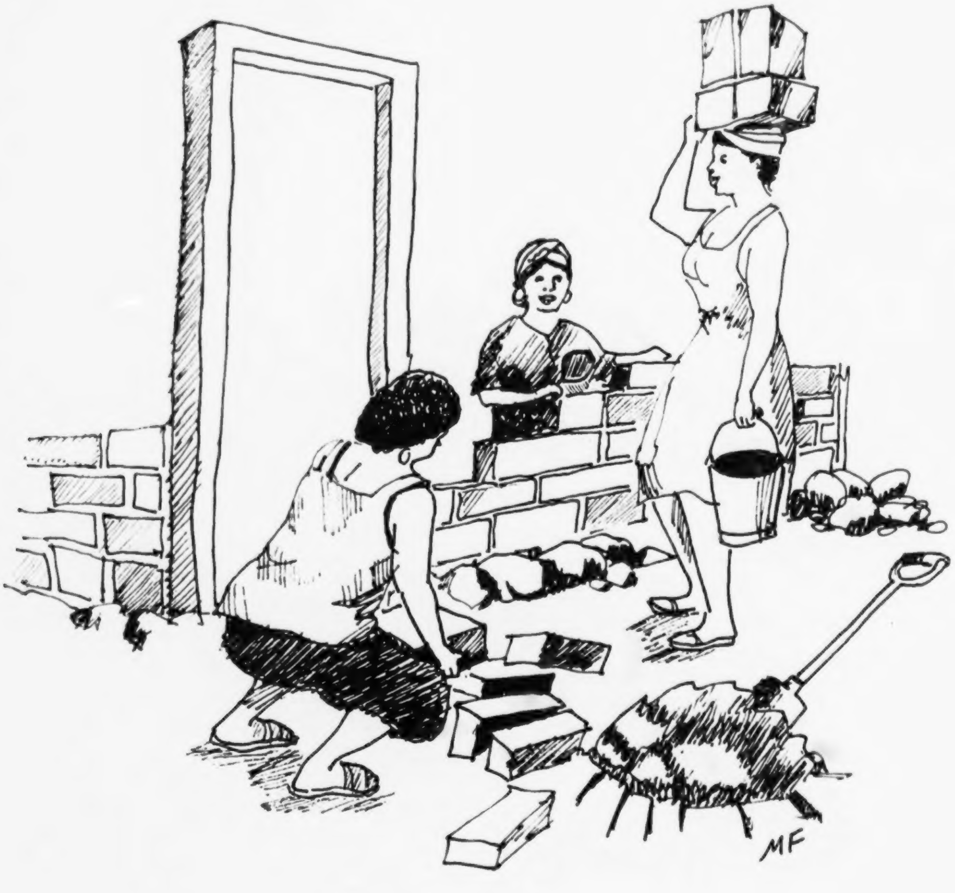
If NFE was not formal "teaching," but more of a two-way process where facilitator and participants learned from each other in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect, maybe "encouraging" or "persuading" was more what he should be doing when he got to his site.

But, he wondered, if NFE is supposed to come from the people, if it was the people's ideas, needs, plans, and goals that were supposed to make it all happen, then maybe "encouraging a man to fish" was all wrong. What if the man wasn't interested in fishing, but wanted to learn how to repair motorcycles? And what if, in his own case, he found that the villagers had more pressing daily concerns than planting trees or learning to use new cookstoves? What if they weren't interested in environmental issues at all? What was he supposed to do with his two years of service?

In training, Chris and his group looked at some examples of what other Volunteers had accomplished in various parts of the world to try to answer some of these questions. They discovered that NFE in practice is never the ideal, that it does not fit neat definitions, that it is often a process of accommodation, of trial and error, of creative adjustment to real personalities, including the Volunteer's own.

Volunteers' real experiences in Swaziland, Guatemala, and Indonesia show how NFE is successful when Volunteers hold on to the values of the NFE approach and try to apply them to whatever they do, in whatever situation they might find themselves, even though that situation may be discouraging or difficult.

SWAZILAND: Finding Space To Make School Uniforms



Mark was the fourth Volunteer to have been assigned to the Ekuphakameni Rural Education Center since its opening in 1977. During his site visit, he had been shown how this Center, like the seven others around the country, housed a secondary school as well as nonformal education facilities for adults and school leavers. The formal school and the nonformal component were supposed to share facilities such as sewing rooms, carpentry equipment and gardens. Mark's job was to coordinate the nonformal education activities.

Upon his arrival, Mark found that the common space was not being shared as he had thought. The NFE program, made up predominantly of women, had been relegated to three small offices. The formal school had expanded to serve twice as many students as originally projected. As a result, space was so scarce that many of the activities had been abandoned and the office Mark had been promised was in a closet. There was no hope of ever getting back the use of the common rooms because student enrollment in the formal school was increasing. The women said they understood and would rather their children use the space.

Mark surveyed the situation at hand. The women were engaged in sewing and knitting school uniforms and holding a few cooking classes. The previous Volunteers had started many activities -- literacy programs, health care, pit latrine construction and water resource development -- but most of these programs had died out as soon as the Volunteers left. In the year since the last Volunteer had been there, the women had organized themselves into a committee to manage the funds for the school uniform project. Their greatest concern seemed to be making enough money to pay for their children's school fees.

As Mark discussed issues informally with the women and observed their work, he realized that they needed proper working space to practice their trade. He talked to committee members and they decided to call a community meeting. At this meeting, someone proposed the idea of constructing a building for the women. Everyone, the chiefs, community elders and the women themselves, thought this was a great idea. At the end of the meeting, everyone was saying, "If Mark can get us a building, we will have something to remember him for."

Mark was distraught by this response. Everyone in the community thought that he would construct the building, while he thought they should build it themselves. In fact, he knew that through the Peace Corps Small Project Assistance program he could only get funds to cover materials. He met with the women's group and explained the situation, but they told him that they did not know how to build and urged him to find money to pay a builder. Mark began looking for additional funding when an idea occurred to him: why not train the women to build by constructing their own building? Not only would they have room for the activities they considered important, they would have learned a new skill as well.

Mark went to the Ministry of Natural Resources a number of times to try to enlist their help. Finally, he was able to meet with the Director of Housing, who agreed to back the project on the condition that the community be willing to experiment with a new type of construction technology -- soil-cement bricks. The Director told Mark that he would assign a construction supervisor to train the women while they built.

Mark called a meeting to discuss this idea with the women. They were very reluctant, for it was time to harvest their maize, and besides, they did not think they could construct the building themselves. But more space was clearly needed, and this plan was the only one they had. They discussed the pros and cons of the idea for a long time. Mark was encouraging, but would not take more than his share of the responsibility. Finally the women made the decision to try, at least, even though it was something that had never been done in their village before.

Mark's only worry was that as the work progressed, the women's other activities might pull them away from the project. He had learned how many vital, time and energy-consuming activities make up a woman's day: child care, long treks to get water, work in the fields, pounding grain for cooking, caring for the sick and elderly. So Mark was careful to get everyone to agree that enough of the group would actually show up each day for work during the five-week construction period. When everyone was sure they were ready to carry out their plan, Mark and the Chairperson of the women's group went to the capital to sign an agreement with the Ministry of Natural Resources. Construction was to begin one month later when the materials would be delivered.

During the first month, Mark helped the women make plans and preparations for the construction. They found accommodations for the construction supervisor and an assistant. The women pressed the soil-cement bricks with a machine borrowed from a nearby project. They gathered rocks for the foundation using a vehicle borrowed from the Ministry of Education. When construction finally began, the small community had become so excited about the project that over thirty people were involved.

Early each morning, Mark and the construction supervisor would mix the mortar so that construction could begin promptly at 8:00 A.M. The community members did all of the bricklaying. Even the weather seemed to cooperate, for it rained only once during the five weeks. When the building was completed right on schedule five weeks later, the women were very pleased with their efforts. They called the new structure "our building" and had a party to celebrate.

(Adapted from Small Project Assistance Report, "Ekuphakameni REC House Construction Project, Swaziland, 1984)

WHY DID THE SWAZILAND PROJECT WORK?

Mark felt good about his work in Swaziland, for he knew that a building that people constructed themselves for purposes they had decided were important was something that would last in the community for a long time.

Mark had not simply helped the women do what they wanted to do, for originally, they had wanted him to provide them with the building. He felt forced to take a more active, directive role than perhaps was the ideal, in order to get the women to try something new, something Mark thought was in their best interest. But still, it did not turn into "Mark's project," because he encouraged the women at every step to make decisions and take action themselves.

Another important reason for the success of the project was that Mark had listened to the women's ideas about what they wanted to do to improve their community. Where the previous Volunteers had attacked the more obvious problems of sanitation, health and illiteracy, Mark understood and respected the fact that these women's first concern was their children's formal education.

Mark was wise to work with existing decision-making structures at both the village and the national level. He enlisted the support of the Director of Housing and agreed to his conditions about trying a new technology. He caught the interest of the Ministry of Education by suggesting that the women borrow their vehicle for moving rocks for the foundation. He listened to women's suggestions about calling a community meeting, which spread enthusiasm for the project throughout the village. He took the time and trouble to go with the Chairperson of the women's committee to the capital to sign the agreement, when it might have been a good deal easier to go by himself.

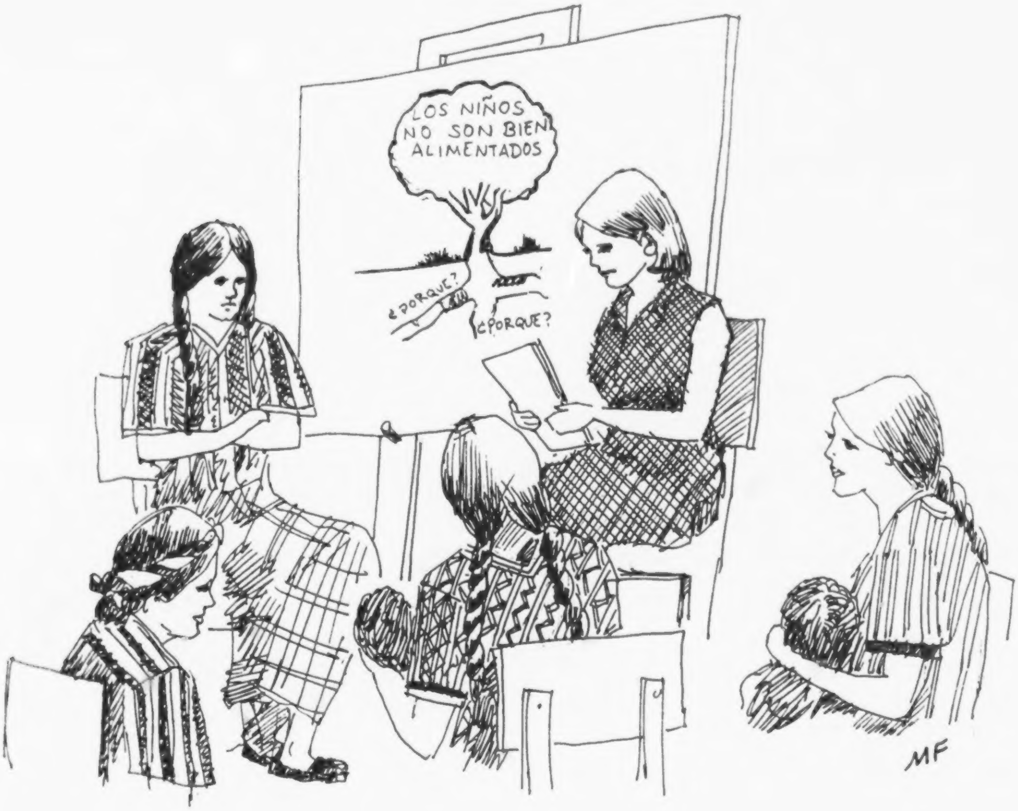
Above all, Mark was patient, and allowed people to take their time to discuss the new idea instead of plunging into action on his own. While the community was thinking the project through, Mark had very little to do. He was bored and restless, and he sometimes worried that he was accomplishing nothing. But he knew that going ahead on his own just for the sake of doing something would have taken the real ownership of the project away from the people.

Even after the women had decided to go ahead, Mark had absolutely no idea whether or not the project would be a success. So many things could have gone wrong. The women might have abandoned the project half way through, causing Mark a great deal of embarrassment with the Director of Housing. The soil-cement bricks might have dissolved in the first rain. The women might not have learned to build properly, making their efforts a village joke. But Mark realized that the principles he was holding to were sound. Although NFE principles cannot guarantee the success of a project, they can make any Volunteer's effort worthwhile.

In Mark's work with the women of his village in Swaziland:

* the local people identified the need
* the Volunteer respected the people's ability to make decisions and act on them
* the Volunteer worked with existing decision-making structures, thus respecting the culture
* the Volunteer encouraged the women to try an unusual, creative solution to the problem they had identified
* the Volunteer was patient and took the necessary time, rather than taking action before the local people felt the project was their own
* the Volunteer worked side by side with people instead of simply teaching them something he thought they needed to learn

GUATEMALA: Improving Child Health Care


LOS NIÑOS NO SON BIEN ALIMENTADOS
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Sarah came to a small town in Guatemala with seven years of public health experience in the U.S. behind her. She was a teacher at heart, and felt most comfortable in front of a blackboard with students sitting and listening attentively. So it wasn't surprising that when she reviewed her job description and found that she was expected to "work with mothers and children on health issues when they visited the town's clinic," that she set out immediately to involve as many of the women as possible in classroom learning.

When Sarah designed her class sessions, she thought carefully about what she should teach. Looking around at the community in the first few weeks, Sarah had noticed how diarrhoea and malnutrition, the leading causes of infant death in the area, were tied to the problems of poor sanitation and the lack of variety in the local diet. It would not be enough, she thought, to teach mothers how to treat the symptoms of illness in their children; she would have to help them learn how to clean up the water that they used at home and create balanced meals with the foods that were available to them.

Although Sarah was used to teaching by the lecture method, she used NFE techniques that she had learned about in training to create a comfortable place where women could come to exchange information about how to sterilize water, find safe places to dispose of garbage, and prepare more nutritious meals for their children. Soon her classroom space became a center of lively discussion and social activity as mothers brought their babies and shared their delight in their increasing good health and developmental progress.

But even though Sarah had changed her usual teaching methods to a more informal, discussion approach, she knew that the women who participated so actively did not fully understand the real causes of their children's health problems. By talking with other Volunteers about group discussion techniques they had used, she learned about a technique for analyzing the root causes of problems.

When Sarah introduced the Problem Tree (see page 66) to her group, she was delighted to find that women who had been silent in early sessions began to speak up and contribute ideas. By the end of the class, the group had come up with many creative suggestions for how to improve sanitation in their homes and protect their children. Many of these ideas branched off into economic and support solutions that Sarah had never heard of, ideas for income generation and collective child care. After that session, the women were quick to suggest things they wanted to learn and even began to organize sessions themselves.

WHY WAS THIS VOLUNTEER SUCCESSFUL IN HER WORK?

With her background in public health, Sarah was quick to spot the real, root causes of infant mortality in her town. She realized that every development problem is tied to other problems in a complex web, and that making real improvements in the infant mortality statistics would mean doing more than teaching mothers how to administer oral rehydration therapy to treat their children's diarrhoea.

Sarah was flexible and willing to try new ways of teaching in order to reach the women in her group. She recognized immediately that discussion and sharing of ideas worked better for this group than the lecture and demonstration methods she had used back home, for even though many of these women had little formal schooling, they were animated and involved in a learning exchange. And by listening to the women talk about their actual situations, Sarah found herself learning more about the problems of poverty than she had ever imagined.

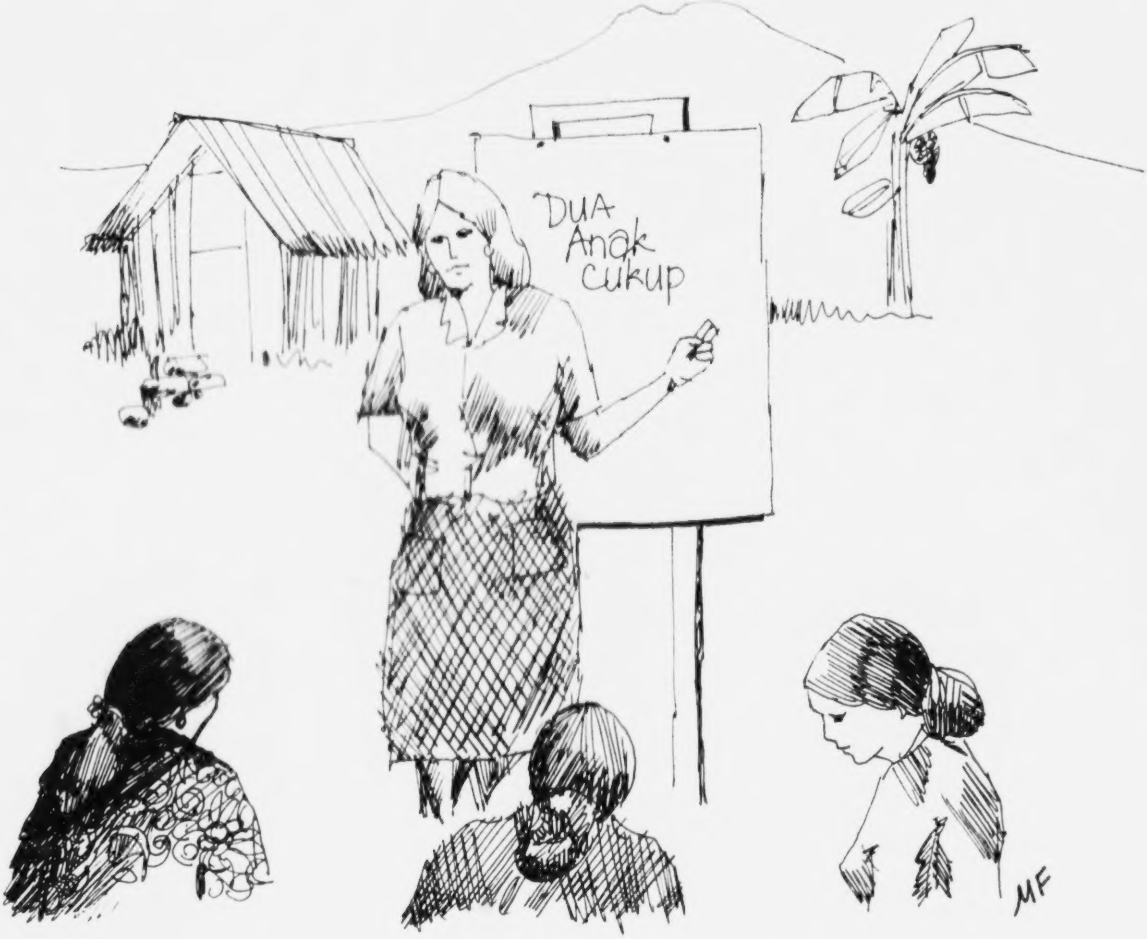
Because of her background and teaching style, Sarah began with a more formal approach to NFE than had been advocated in her pre-service training program. She set up classes and decided on the content without asking the women what they wanted to learn, or even if they saw the need for classes. But because of her enthusiastic nature and her willingness to try new techniques, the women became involved anyway. And when they did begin to take charge of their own learning and set up classes on their own, Sarah did not interpret this, as other formally trained teachers might, as a threat to her authority.

Above all, Sarah never felt that her experience as a teacher and her knowledge of health issues made her superior to the women in her classes. Though some of them were illiterate, she respected their years of experience raising children and their ability to survive with good humor and uncommon kindness under conditions of appalling poverty. From the first day she met them, Sarah believed that the women in her classes had the intelligence, the creativity, and the will to change their own lives.

These, then, are the NFE principles and techniques that worked for Sarah:

- the Volunteer helped the participants to look beyond the immediate problems to understand their root causes
- the Volunteer found effective techniques for group discussion, and got silent group members actively thinking of solutions to their own problems
- the Volunteer learned from the people at least as much as they learned from her
- both the Volunteer and the people she served began to believe in themselves and in their ability to create change

INDONESIA: WHO CAN TALK ABOUT FAMILY PLANNING?



Pat arrived in her Indonesian village wondering how in the world she was going to put NFE into practice. The government had recently started a country-wide family planning initiative that as far as she could see had no support at the village level. Although she was to work in a remote region of the country, her responsibility was to the Ministry officials in the capital. Somehow, she thought, these bureaucrats expected her to teach people about contraception whether they wanted to learn or not, and convince people to start spacing their children.

Feeling she had no choice but to do the job she had been assigned to the best of her ability, Pat contacted key village leaders and traditional birth attendants, prepared flipcharts and posters with carefully drawn diagrams, and set up meetings to talk about family planning to the village women.

Pat's worst expectations were realized when only a handful of women turned up at the first meeting. Although she encouraged discussion and asked people for their opinions, nobody spoke up, and the atmosphere became more and more uncomfortable. When Pat began to show her flipcharts, however, things went from bad to worse, for most of the women lowered their heads and sat in silent protest.

Pat closed the meeting and went home embarrassed and angry that she had been sent into a situation that in her opinion could not improve unless the people themselves expressed a need for the kind of information she was prepared to provide.

Pat was not sufficiently fluent in Bahasa Indonesian to talk about these things with anyone in her village. However, during pre-service training, she had become good friends with one of her Indonesian trainers. As soon as she was able, Pat went to see Endang and asked his advice. Endang was sympathetic, but thoroughly pragmatic. "In our country," he told her, "people expect the government to take charge of things like this. The women you met with weren't protesting the government's family planning initiative, they were embarrassed at the way you talked about such a sensitive subject."

Endang reminded Pat of the traditional puppet show she and her training group had attended early in the program. Even though she had understood little of the skit, Pat remembered being impressed by the boisterous response of the crowd. Endang told her of a Volunteer in a village near hers who had worked with an agricultural discussion group to develop a puppet show around another government program: integrated fish and rice farming. He suggested that she go and visit him.

When Pat arrived in Scott's village she found him working with his discussion group on a new production. As she talked the problem over with Scott and his group she learned that puppet shows were the traditional forum for sensitive topics. Puppets could do and say things that flesh and blood people would never discuss openly. Even mixed audiences could discuss the actions of the puppets and learn valuable lessons from them while being entertained.

While Pat knew that to be fully effective she would need to further develop her language skills and gradually become closer friends with the people in her village, she felt that using traditional puppets could get the women talking. In fact, she thought, puppet shows might even begin to involve the men. As a health worker she understood that it was important for the women to have control over family spacing, but if the men did not also receive this information there could be little hope for successful family planning.

Pat returned to her village, ready to try this new approach. While her work was just starting, she was beginning to feel confident that she had found an answer that would allow her to develop the NFE response most appropriate to both the message she was supposed to convey and the cultural context that she found herself in.

HOW CAN NFE WORK HERE?

Pat found that some NFE techniques worked better than others in the context of her particular assignment. While discussion groups and visual aids might have been very effective in other circumstances, here they only embarrassed and insulted the village women. But by looking to traditional NFE techniques that had been developed centuries ago in Indonesian society Pat would be able to convey her message in a way that dignified both the subject matter and the audience.

Pat was particularly open to learning from personal critique. She drew on the experience of her Indonesian trainer and accepted his critique of her first attempts without becoming defensive. And instead of holding onto her anger about "the way things were supposed to be," Pat was flexible and made the best of a situation that was not ideal, from her point of view. After all, she decided, even if the people had not been consulted about family planning, they were still capable of deciding for themselves if and how they would use the information she would provide.

Even in a situation where Volunteers must respond to an externally imposed initiative, NFE techniques and principles can be used effectively:

* **the Volunteer did not insist on using what were obviously inappropriate learning techniques for that culture**

* **the Volunteer let herself learn from the expertise of Host Country Nationals and other Volunteers**

* **the Volunteer used traditional NFE techniques to amuse and inform her audience**

* **the Volunteer was open to critique and willing to be flexible in a difficult situation.**

As Chris studied these examples of Volunteers putting NFE into action, he began to revise his idea of success in his Peace Corps service. Instead of showing people what was in their best interest and teaching them ways to improve their lives, Chris was beginning to realize that people would respond more positively to him if he took on a different role.

He would not go to "teach a man to fish;" instead, he would try to listen to what both men and women wanted to do -- whether it was fishing or something completely different -- and try to help them accomplish it. But in order to do so, he would have to understand more about how adults learn.

CHAPTER 3

HOW ADULTS LEARN

* How are adults motivated to learn something new?

* What kind of relationship should you try to develop with people as you help them accomplish their goals?

* What kinds of cultural differences might affect you and the groups you are working with?

* How can adult learning theory help you do a better job?

Like Chris and all Peace Corps Volunteers, you are deeply involved with adult learning. You may never teach a class or contribute to a training workshop, but by living and working with adults every day you are influencing people's behavior, their ways of thinking about themselves, their knowledge of the outside world, their aspirations for the future. To do this consciously, and therefore perhaps more effectively, you should understand some of what is known about how adults learn.

Adult learning theory is relatively new; it was pulled together in the 1960s and 1970s from fields as diverse as the behaviorism of B.F. Skinner, the humanistic psychology of Abraham Maslow, the radical educational philosophy of Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich, and more recently, from the cross-cultural insights of many practitioners in the field.

In order to present this field of knowledge to you in a concise way, some of the more important concepts have been organized into eight rather definitive-sounding statements about how adults learn. Feel free to add to this list, to quarrel with it, and to reformulate the statements in the light of what you have learned about your adopted culture.

Here are the eight "non-tenets" of adult learning:

1. **Adults expect to be treated with respect and recognition.**
2. **Adults want practical solutions to real-life problems.**
3. **Adults can reflect on and analyze their own experiences.**
4. **Different adults have different learning styles.**
5. **Adults can be motivated by the possibility of fulfilling their personal needs and aspirations.**
6. **Adults need the support of their peers in their learning.**
7. **Adults need to communicate their feelings in culturally appropriate ways.**
8. **Adults are capable of making their own decisions and taking charge of their own development.**

These concepts can be illustrated by stories about Volunteers, both in the early days of the Peace Corps and today: where they went wrong, how they learned from experience in the field, why they sometimes remain baffled by their co-workers' behavior. By looking at these experiences in the light of adult learning theory you will understand some of the reasons for the difficulties that so many Volunteers have had, and begin to see some possible ways around these problems.

However, some issues remain so thorny and contradictory that they will be presented to you without solutions. Volunteers from Peace Corps' earliest days have thought about these issues throughout their service and long afterwards. So although you are encouraged to develop your own opinion about them, you should not expect to solve them for all time. They are just too complex for easy answers.

1. ADULTS EXPECT TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT AND RECOGNITION.

The pharmacy was filthy, there was no doubt about that. Helen and Dave stood on stepladders sweeping out dead cockroaches and pulling down the grimy medicine bottles from the shelves that lined the wall behind the counter. The old pharmacist stood to one side in silence, raising a handkerchief to cover his mouth from time to time and coughing from the dust. He had protested a little at the beginning, but these two young Volunteers were ignoring him. They had arrived suddenly at the missionary hospital on a rickety bus from out of the jungle -- nobody really knew why. People said they were fleeing the fighting in the south and had nowhere else to go.

Helen and Dave attacked the shelves with great energy. Their schools had been closed for over a month, and taking refuge in a missionary compound deep in the interior, as Peace Corps had insisted, seemed an incredible waste of time. But finally, the Mission doctor had put them to work. "If you feel like it," he had said kindly, "why don't you clean out the pharmacy?"

"Can you believe this?" Helen laughed. "Expiration date 1962!" She tossed the bottle in the dustbin where it landed with a resounding clang. The old pharmacist winced and shuffled his feet.

"How can he tell where anything is?" said Dave in astonishment. "He has no system! We're going to have to rearrange everything."

A few hours later the Volunteers folded their stepladders and surveyed the pharmacy with satisfaction. The outdated potions were all safely thrown away, and the remaining bottles *gleamed on freshly lined shelves. Medicines whose names started with "A" stood in the upper left hand corner and continued through the alphabet to end at the lower right.*

As Helen and Dave strolled off through the compound, the old pharmacist scowled and drew his shawl more tightly around his thin shoulders. Then he climbed up on a chair, took the medicines starting with "A" and put them back in their accustomed places...

ADULT EDUCATION THEORY: Malcolm Knowles

It takes no great theoretical knowledge to understand why the afternoon's work of these Volunteers would soon be undone. But it is always easier to see someone else's failings from an outsider's view. Adult Education theorist Malcolm Knowles will help Volunteers keep the obvious in mind while they are intimately involved with their task of communication and education across cultures: that adults learn best when they are treated with recognition of their lifetime of experience, and with respect for the independent decision-making roles that they have taken in their families and society.

Knowles proposed the term "andragogy" to describe "the art and science of helping adults learn," to distinguish it from "pedagogy," the instruction of children. Because children have yet to assume responsible, independent roles in society, teachers and parents tend to make the decisions about what and how they should learn.

It may be argued that children, too, learn best when their ideas and point of view are respected -- after all, it is not unusual to find adults undoing children's efforts with the same unconscious arrogance that was so demeaning to the Indian pharmacist.

But while such disregard for the learner's own ideas may be justified, or at least commonplace in the education of children, Knowles argues that it is out of place in working with adults, no matter how "wrong" their system may seem. Adults, according to Knowles, are the ones who can most accurately judge the value and relevance of education. Because adults have taken on mature, decision-making roles in life, they are capable of participating in the planning and implementation of their own learning.

Pedagogy is preparation for maturity, says Knowles, andragogy is assistance in carrying out those mature roles more effectively.

IS THERE A BETTER WAY?

What could these Volunteers have done to show the pharmacist the respect and recognition he was due, but at the same time get rid of the cockroaches and protect the public from spoiled medications?

Twenty-five years later, these same Volunteers have offered some insight into how they could have handled this situation better. Had they known more about NFE principles at the time, they might have:

* *SPENT TIME WITH THE PHARMACIST FIRST.* Even though they had little time to work with him, they could have started by talking to him about his work and the difficulties he might have in obtaining and dispensing medicines, all the while clarifying who they were and why they were there.

* *ASKED THE PHARMACIST ABOUT HIS SYSTEM OF STORING MEDICATIONS.* What the Volunteers didn't realize was that the pharmacist's system made sense: he stored the most commonly used medicines in the center of the wall of shelves where he could reach them easily. He was not in the best of health, and he would have found it painful to climb on the chair to the "A" shelf every time he wanted to reach the aspirin.

* *ASKED THE PHARMACIST HOW THEY COULD HELP CLEAN THE PHARMACY.* The pharmacist didn't like dust and dead cockroaches any better than the Volunteers did. If they had shown respect for his position and been gentler on his personal pride, he might have been able to agree to their help.

* *TACTFULLY ASKED THE PHARMACIST WHY HE KEPT OUTDATED MEDICINES.* If they had, they would have discovered that the pharmacist in this extremely isolated area considered any medicines better than none. He may have been dead wrong, but his logic was conditioned by the circumstances.

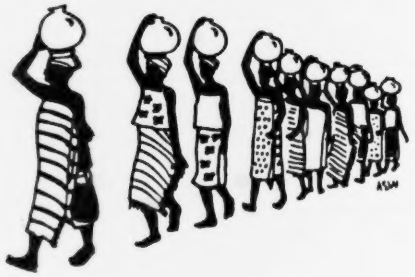
(But if the Volunteers could not explain the danger of this practice to the pharmacist's satisfaction, do you think they should have told the doctor in charge of the hospital what was happening?)

* *APPROACHED THE TASK AS A MUTUAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN WITH A SINGLE, PREDETERMINED GOAL.* The Volunteers cleaned the pharmacy their own way because they wanted something to do, and, of course, because they were convinced their way was right. Approaching the task more slowly, sitting around talking with an old man in a dusty, dark room, perhaps for several days or weeks, would have been much more difficult than imperiously calling for hot water and tossing medicines in the dustbin. But the Volunteers would have learned at least as

much as they had to teach, and that humility in itself would have been a powerful message.

2. ADULTS WANT PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO REAL-LIFE PROBLEMS.

Chris, the new Volunteer we have been following in his Peace Corps training, has started to catch on to the need to work with people rather than on them. By now, his training is over and to his great delight, he has passed his French test with a higher score than he anticipated. As soon as he arrived at his site, he learned a few words of Ewé, the local language, and started trying to communicate with his neighbors. Soon he was working with a group of women who seemed to be interested in the fuel-efficient cookstoves that he learned how to make during training. But while Chris thinks he has started to make progress, it is evident that he is still unaware of the problems that some of these village women face in their daily lives.



Afiba's elder co-wife was giving her trouble. Why was she spending time with the "Yovo" making a new stove? They had a perfectly good stove in their courtyard, and certainly Afiba had plenty to do without wasting time giggling with an American. Who knows where that might lead?

Afiba herself looked at the stove-making project as a welcome chance for a few moments of sociability in a day of drudgery. She was up at four, then had to tend to her husband's breakfast, cook for the mid-day meal, wash and feed her children, walk to the fields, and then hoe in the blazing sun most of the day, leaving her youngest at the edge of the field with the other infants and going to him only when he cried. Then she would walk back to the compound, go to the stream for water ten or eleven times, and finally begin the long, exhausting chore of pounding yams for dinner. After that she would escape, sometimes, from her co-wife's watchful eye, to work on the stove project with Chris and a few of the fun-loving young women.

But Afiba had no intention of actually replacing the stove in the courtyard with the new, strange-looking variety. First of all, her co-wife would have a fit. Second, she thought she'd heard that it required a certain kind of wood, cut to a certain size. How was she going to get that? It was the ten-year-old's job to find firewood, not hers. Third, what if the new stove didn't cook the dinner the same as the old stove? Her husband wouldn't like that at all. And if it brought bad luck to the family? Unthinkable.

Her friend Ayélé had argued with her, and said that the new stove would be better in the long run, because, as the "Yovo" had explained, the trees wouldn't disappear so fast and the children wouldn't have such a job finding firewood. But Afiba had enough troubles of her own without worrying about children's problems. And as for the trees disappearing, it was well known that the ancestors were drying them up at their roots in order to communicate their displeasure. Too many new ideas in the village nowadays, that's what they didn't like. Or so the elders were always saying.

EDUCATION THEORY: John Dewey

What did John Dewey have to say that is relevant to Afiba's life in a remote West African village? Dewey wrote about progressive education in the early 1900s when massive immigration and industrialization were causing a severe social, economic and political upheaval in the United States. Dewey believed in the power of education to deal with these social problems, and understood that the abstract, authoritarian methods so prominent in American schools at that time were unsuited to the development of the social consciousness necessary in a democracy.

Dewey believed in practical, hands-on education that would help people solve real problems in their lives. Learners had a natural inclination to grapple with problems, Dewey thought, and defining their own problems to be solved was the way that people would develop the capacity to act as free individuals in a society that was in a state of constant growth and development.

While the reformers in early twentieth century America in fact had strong things to say about superstition and people's reluctance to be "modern," if we are to take Dewey at his word, his theory places great responsibility on the learner. Instead of suggesting solutions, the teacher needs to help learners accomplish their own goals. As Dewey says, "The experience of doing must be selected by the learner in line with his own theory of what he needs to do."

What was Afiba's theory of what she needed to do? Maybe her theory of getting along in life was to not make waves, to work as hard as she could in the situation in which she found herself and make the best of it. Maybe using the cookstove group as a diversion was just what she needed to do, psychologically, to put a little fun into her difficult life. Maybe not using her cookstove in the end would actually keep things from getting worse.

ISSUE: How can the Volunteer communicate a vision of a larger, interconnected world while still respecting people's need to solve their immediate problems in their own way? How can Chris's message about preserving the environment for future generations be reconciled with Afiba's need to get through each day as best she can?

3. ADULTS CAN REFLECT ON AND ANALYZE THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES.

Jason and his Malaysian counterpart had spent a month planning field trips for a group of farmers they had identified as high risk-takers. "Our children are going to high school," they said. "They want to get office jobs in the city. We cannot count on their labor, so we must try new methods to succeed without them."

But when Jason and Kamaruddin brought the new, high-yield seed from the Ministry and explained how to plant it, the farmers seemed a little uneasy. If only they could see how other farmers have succeeded with this seed, Jason thought, they'll be ready to try it on their own. He determined to arrange for the local group of farmers to visit farms in a neighboring district that were using the new seed.

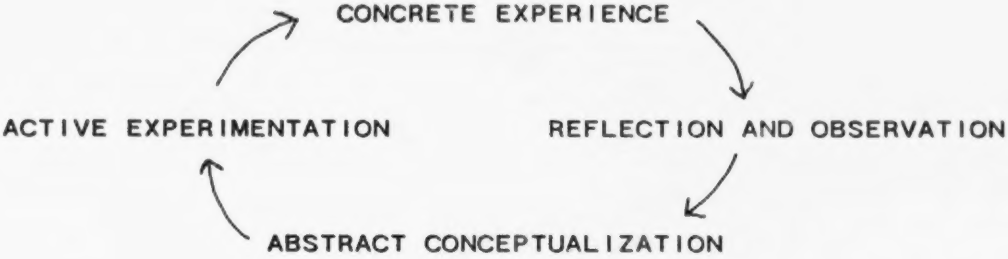
The field trips seemed to be an unqualified success. The group was welcomed by farmers who showed off their vigorous crops and explained how they had gotten them to grow so well. Everyone listened attentively and went home saying how much they had enjoyed the experience. But the next season, none of the farmers asked for seed, and planted their old crops exactly as they had before.

When Jason and Kamaruddin asked their group what had happened, they got polite, evasive responses. The weather was not quite right this year, they said. Their storage facilities needed repair and probably couldn't hold any extra harvest. But next year they would surely try.

Jason was extremely discouraged. He had been in his village long enough to know what that reply meant. Somehow, the farmers weren't convinced. But why?

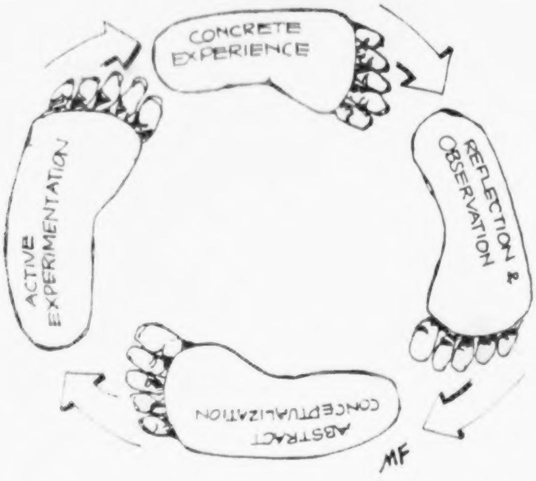
THEORY: DAVID KOLB: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE

Kolb developed the following model to show how adults analyze their experience in order to understand it and apply it in new situations.



We start by having some sort of experience, then we reflect on this experience, generalize from it, and finally apply what we have learned from it to a new situation. Peace Corps experience is a case in point. You're having the experience now, but at the same time you are starting to reflect on it (what is happening?), to generalize about it (why is this happening?) and to apply what you've learned to your work.

If you are like thousands of Volunteers before you, the reflection, generalization and application phases of your Peace Corps experience will continue for the rest of your life. Though you will process and apply many other, less intense experiences over shorter periods of time, in order to effectively learn from them you will naturally and perhaps unconsciously go through Kolb's stages of the learning cycle, step by step.



Kolb thinks that people are more adept at learning from some of the stages of the cycle than they are from others. Some of us have experience after experience but hardly reflect on them at all. Some of us are good reflectors, but shy away from experiencing anything too unusual. Others can reflect and generalize, but stop there, without being able to apply the learning to new situations. Kolb suggests that adult educators can facilitate learning by consciously taking participants through the entire cycle of experience, reflection, generalization and application.

You can do this with the people you work with by helping them think an experience through. This process of guided reflection is known as "processing." You can help people "process" an experience by asking them questions that draw out their ideas about what the experience meant to them and how this meaning might be applied to their own agenda for learning.

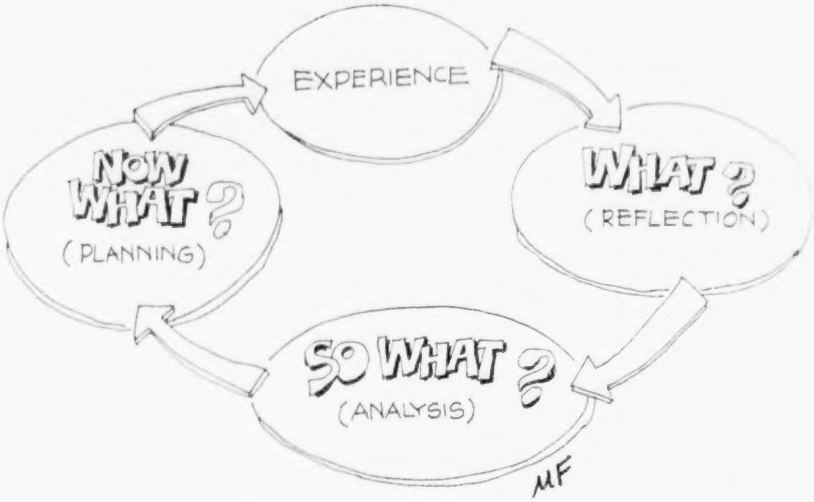
For example, going on a field trip takes participants through only one quarter of the learning cycle: the concrete experience. Upon their return home, participants can consolidate their learning by:

★ First: Reflection -- recalling what happened

★ Second: Abstract Conceptualization -- beginning to make sense of the experience, drawing conclusions, seeing patterns, formulating rules or theories

★ Third: Active Experimentation -- deciding how they will use what they have learned in order to improve, expand, change or re-learn their options for the future.

You can remember the experiential learning cycle easily if you think of it this way:



A BETTER WAY TO CONDUCT A FIELD TRIP:

Try to apply what you have just learned about Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle to Jason's field trip plans for farmers. What questions could he ask them to bring them through the "What? So what? Now what?" cycle to the point at which they can see the relevance of the field trip to their own situation?

Remember that the trip took the farmers to a neighboring district where the customs, agricultural practices and even soil conditions may have been different from those in the farmers' experience. Try to guess what the farmers' unexpressed doubts and objections might be. This will help you understand their reluctance to apply what their neighbors did to their own situation.

On the next page are some all-purpose processing questions for each of the stages in the experiential learning cycle. You can choose among them to construct a logical progression of questions that are specific to Jason's group or to a group of your own that may be learning something entirely different.

WHAT?

Can you recall what we just did?
What were the steps involved?
Describe how it felt.
What struck you as particularly interesting or significant?

SO WHAT?

How can you account for that?
Was that good or bad?
How might it have been different?
What does that suggest to you about yourself or your group?
What do you understand better about yourself or your group?
Were there any surprises? Things that puzzled you?
How many of you felt the same? How many felt differently?

NOW WHAT?

What did you learn/re-learn from this experience?
Does that remind you of anything? What does that help explain?
How could you improve that?
What would be the consequences of doing or not doing that?
How does that relate to other experiences?
How could you apply this to your own situation?
What might you do to help/hinder the process?
What modifications can you think of to help it work for you?
What will you continue to do?
What are the costs/benefits?
How might the experience have been more meaningful?

Some excellent examples of different types of activities that take participants through the experiential learning cycle are included in the handbook, Women Working Together for Personal, Economic and Community Development, ICE #WD003. The activities in the handbook are designed for use by both literate and non-literate groups and also illustrate many of the other adult learning concepts discussed in this chapter.

4. DIFFERENT ADULTS HAVE DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES.

Tracy had always liked fiddling with mechanical things, and so when the new refrigeration unit in the clinic broke down, she volunteered to take it apart to see what was wrong. If the men working around the hospital in her village in Micronesia were amused, they kept it to themselves. They *didn't know how to fix the unit, and they knew that the perishable medicines that were flown in so infrequently would spoil if the units weren't fixed somehow. The men glanced at Tracy sometimes as she worked, sitting there on the floor with grimy hands. If they stopped to watch, Tracy would say, "Now here's something interesting," and hold up a piece of oily metal.*

When the unit was working again, Tracy had its inner mechanisms completely figured out in her head. She could see each piece in relation to the others, like a three-dimensional jig-saw puzzle. It was beautiful, she thought, the way it all went together.

Tracy's supervisor was pleased. In fact, she said, Tracy's skills could undoubtedly be put to use on some of the other islands where technical know-how was lacking. She arranged to send Tracy on a trip to teach refrigeration repair to hospital workers in every village where the new units had been installed.

At her first stop, Tracy asked the clinic administrator if she could borrow the refrigerator. If the maintenance person could take the unit apart, she reasoned, he would understand how it all went together as clearly as she had.

Permission was granted, and Tracy sat down on the floor with Paul and had him take the unit apart and put it back together again. Paul followed her instructions without saying much, but finally he relinquished his usually taciturn nature long enough to allow himself one comment: "I'm never going to remember this. Do you have something on paper?"

For a moment, Tracy was confused. She thought she understood adult learning. Adults were interested in hands-on experiences to solve practical problems, not lectures or useless hand-outs. Then she brightened. It's self-confidence he lacks, she said to herself. "Don't worry," she told him. "You'll learn by doing. It's the best way."

LEARNING STYLE THEORY: DAVID KOLB

Kolb popularized a fact that sensitive teachers have long known, that different people have different learning styles. His Learning Style Inventory, which he developed in 1976, is a self-test that identifies the parts of the experiential learning cycle that each individual finds the easiest.

People who learn best by concrete experience, according to Kolb, make judgments based on feelings or intuition, rather than on theory, which they often dismiss as being "unrelated to real life," or "too abstract." They are people-oriented, and relate more easily to peers than to authority figures. They benefit most from feedback and discussion with other participants who prefer this same mode of learning. If they were learning refrigerator repair, they might have liked a brief orientation from Tracy and then a chance to tinker with the thing by themselves.

Learners who are most comfortable with reflective observation are more tentative and prefer to listen, think and stand back before making judgments or consolidating their learning. They seem introverted in learning situations compared to their more active peers because they enjoy listening to lectures or to others' opinions while they take on the role of impartial, objective observers. Paul was probably more of a reflective observer than Tracy. He might have preferred that she demonstrate how to take apart and repair the refrigerator and then given him the handouts he finally requested.

Those who are comfortable with abstract conceptualization tend to be thought of as "logical," and "objective" by their friends and may seem dispassionate or withdrawn in a learning situation. They tend to be oriented more towards things and symbols and less toward their peers. They learn best from authority figures in an impersonal environment. These learners can be frustrated by the "hands-on" approach that Tracy thought so valuable when teaching refrigeration repair, and would have preferred a lecture with plenty of diagrams and handouts that they could study on their own.

Active experimenters learn best when they tackle a project with their hands, often working in groups. Like those who learn best from concrete experience, they are extroverts, but instead of approaching each problem as a special case, they formulate hypotheses and actively test them out. They dislike lectures and other passive learning situations. Tracy would relate well to active experimenters, as they fit her preferred mode of learning best. Actually, in her teaching, Tracy did not let Paul come up with hypotheses to test, but took him through the process step by step. This was probably just as well, as Paul would have been even more confused by this kind of problem-solving approach and might well have felt stupid and inadequate by the time the session was over.

Kolb points out that individual learners are unlikely to find themselves accurately characterized by just one of these four learning modes. This is because everyone learns by a combination of methods, drawing from all four quadrants of the experiential learning cycle. However, people can be characterized as dominantly one type of learner or another.

Thus, in any group, there are likely to be people who are comfortable with quite diverse methods of learning.

ONE SOLUTION TO THE REFRIGERATION REPAIR PROBLEM

Perhaps Tracy's dominant mode of learning is active experimentation; perhaps in fact she does not fit easily into any of Kolb's categories. Other theorists have grouped learners differently: right-brained (artistic) and left-brained (analytic), for example, or auditory and visual. Howard Gardner, of the Harvard Project on Human Potential, postulates that there exist multiple intelligences: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial and bodily-kinesthetic. Whatever category she might fit, one thing is clear; Tracy taught refrigeration repair the way she likes to learn.

This tactic is not unusual; many teachers assume that their students are like themselves -- or should be. Creative, artistic types try to draw out latent creativity; conformists insist that their students conform. Teachers who feel they've really learned something when they hear a good lecture require that their students take notes. And those who learn best by doing -- get their students on the floor taking refrigerators apart.

Tracy would have done better to be flexible and let her student be the judge of how he learned best. But if she had been working with a group, the situation would have been even more complicated. If different people have different learning styles, how can a facilitator design an experience to accommodate everyone?

One way would be to incorporate many styles of learning into a single lesson. Tracy might present diagrams that learners could follow during the hands-on phase. She might talk a bit about the physical principles that underlie a refrigeration unit's malfunction, thus satisfying some participants' need for theory. And for those who learn best by memorization, or whose mechanical sense is marginal at best, she might have presented a step-by-step handout or a trouble-shooting guide.

Another way Tracy might have dealt with the problem would have been to find out the dominant method of learning in the Micronesian culture. She might have spent some time observing or asking questions about how people there learn to repair things or make things with their hands. Do people traditionally observe and imitate? Do they listen to explanations, or memorize, or apprentice themselves over a long period of time instead of trying to learn everything in a single shot?

Developing a variety of teaching methods and finding out how people traditionally learn would certainly have taken more time, but in the end, it might have prevented Tracy and the people she worked with a good deal of frustration.

5. ADULTS CAN BE MOTIVATED BY THE POSSIBILITY OF FULFILLING THEIR PERSONAL NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS.

> *"There were eight children, completely nude. The pigs and cows were living with the people. There was no difference between the animals and the children. It was so striking, the contrast between the exuberant jungle outside and the conditions inside that tiny house, lit by one candle. Everything was silent as we looked at each other. One after another we began to cry. We were so sad to see with our own eyes the poverty of our people."*

This volunteer in Central America was part of a literacy campaign that sent college students into the countryside to help their own people. When Joan read her words (in Valerie Miller's book "Between Struggle and Hope: The Nicaraguan Literacy Crusade") as she lay in her hammock in her village on another continent, she knew that young woman had faced what she was struggling with every day. How was she to teach literacy to people who must endure such conditions?

Three Peace Corps Volunteers in Joan's area had ET'd because the literacy program hadn't gotten off the ground. And Joan could see why. What kind of sense did reciting the alphabet and learning to recognize "ba be bi bo bu" make to these people? Joan was determined to try a new approach.

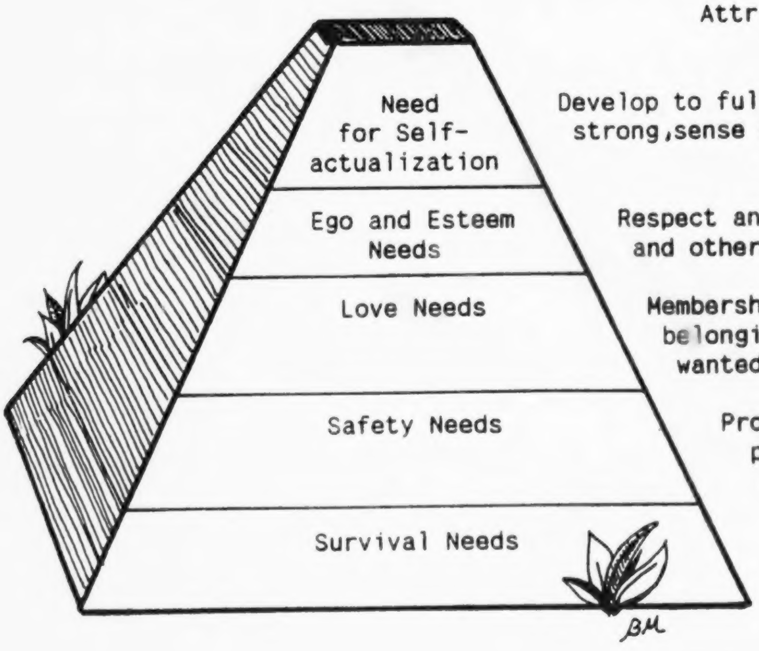
With her counterparts in the village, Joan designed a new set of lessons that related directly to the people's experience. She encouraged the few participants to talk about their lives and question if it was really fate that kept them in such poverty. Her most dedicated students flourished under the new program, and with Joan's help, they wrote some moving stories. But still, attendance remained low. And after six months, some of her old students who had participated so actively had lost most of the literacy they had gained in the program. It seemed to Joan that they were back to square one. What had gone wrong?

THEORY: MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Abraham Maslow was a humanistic psychologist who believed that people strive for "self-actualization" in order to reach their highest human potential. This involves releasing an inner tendency for good, an increase in understanding of others and of self, an awareness of inner growth, an increase in autonomy, and finally, a greater potential to change and shape one's environment. All these are active and expressive behaviors: exploring, experiencing, choosing, enjoying, transforming and doing. They are not just coping, but embracing possibility.

Maslow developed his model of a hierarchy of needs to show that such self-actualizing behavior cannot be expected until other vital needs are satisfied. Our primary needs are for survival; then we can think of safety, love, and self-esteem in that order, before self-actualization is possible.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Attributes

Develop to fullest potential; strong sense of individuality.

Respect and liking for self and others.

Membership, acceptance, belonging, feeling loved and wanted.

Protection from physical or psychological threat, need for order and structure.

Food, water, shelter, clothing, etc.

In addition, Maslow suggests, a person's position in the hierarchy may change from hour to hour, day to day, year to year. Even a wealthy person cannot concentrate on her work if she has had no breakfast, and a person who is comfortable with himself and has no particular need to work on his self-esteem may suddenly find he must concentrate on personal safety.

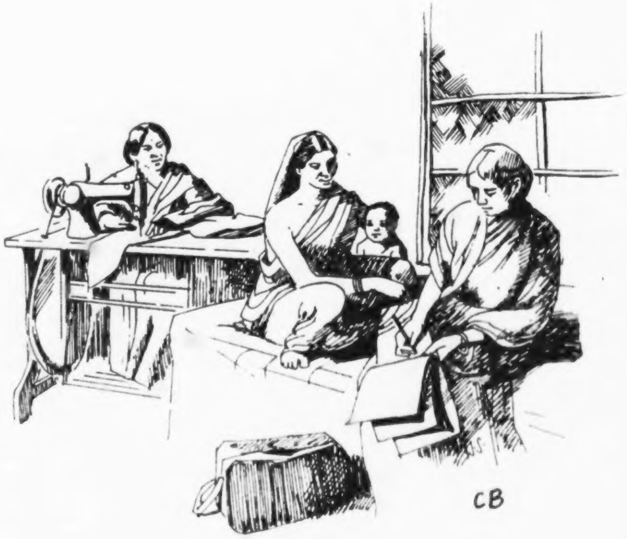
According to Maslow's theory, learners concerned so intimately with simple survival cannot devote their energy to inner growth and a greater understanding of their circumstances until their basic needs are satisfied. Perhaps Joan's students were too hungry and exhausted to concentrate on literacy, whether it was presented to them as nonsense syllables or as stories for reflection. What do you think? (For an alternative view, read Freire's The Pedagogy of the Oppressed and see example #8 in this chapter.)

IS THERE A BETTER WAY?

If Maslow's hierarchy helps us understand what went wrong with Joan's literacy program, how could she design a program to satisfy some of the participants' basic needs while at the same time teaching them literacy skills?

Literacy and numeracy programs that are tied to income generating activities sometimes hold participants' interest better than other types of programs because the skills they learn are immediately useful. For example, if students are taught to write and recognize numbers in order to keep a simple account book (see page 97) they can start right away to improve the financing of a small business endeavor. Often, illiterate street vendors can already do simple arithmetic very rapidly in their heads and only need to do a few lessons before they can see a difference in their accounting practices -- and the possibility of getting a loan.

In the same way, reading and writing can be geared specifically and immediately to the economic needs of the participants. For example, women who wanted to organize a sewing cooperative would spend a little while each day reviewing words on shopping lists, brainstorming ideas for posters and reading with pride the finished product advertising their services. As they became able to recognize a few words, their interest in literacy increased, for they could see its value in meeting their basic needs.



Even people living in abject poverty, who cannot dream of starting a small business, have used specific literacy skills to meet their survival needs. "Now that I can read what the landlord marks in his book," said one new literate, "I can check to see if I am really paying the right amount."

6. ADULTS NEED THE SUPPORT OF THEIR PEERS

Maggie was an older Volunteer with a lifetime of teacher training experience behind her. But her high school math teachers in the Central African Republic were a challenge and a half. There they were, listening to each other's model lessons and taking copious notes, all negative, and using them to tear each other's presentations to shreds. Even though they knew they would be next up on the firing line, the teachers spared no ammunition.

"You looked ridiculous when you contradicted yourself up there," the teachers told one sheepish presenter. "Just a minute ago you said that infinity divided by zero was infinity, and now you say the answer is zero. Your students will lose all respect for you if you come so unprepared."

Maggie sighed. Yes, the teachers could be better prepared. But their habit of fierce criticism of each other was only making them defensive, and it wasn't improving their presentations a bit. How could she get them to go easier on each other -- and themselves?

THEORY: FEEDBACK

"Feedback" is information about how a person's behavior affects others. Maggie's teachers were giving each other ineffective feedback; their criticisms were laced with emotionally loaded phrases: "you looked ridiculous," "and now you say the answer is..." Anyone would feel defensive under such an attack.

Effective feedback, on the other hand, takes the humanity of the receiver into account. It is gentle, but not necessarily all positive. Like the inappropriate feedback in the example, it is specific, and mentions particular circumstances, words or actions that the receiver can understand and change, if necessary. ("You are always unprepared" is even less effective than "You were unprepared today.")

Ideally, feedback is solicited, rather than imposed, and involves the sharing of information, rather than the giving of advice. It contains only the amount of information the receiver can use or hear at a given moment, rather than everything that is on one's mind. And it does not concern itself with why people act the way they do; "You were unprepared because you were afraid to ask for help last night," is more intrusive and potentially painful to the receiver than simply, "You were unprepared."

Using these clues to effective feedback, how would you talk to the teacher about the mistake in his model lesson?

Remember, effective feedback is:

- gentle
- straightforward
- specific
- limited in quantity

It is not:

- emotionally loaded
- imposed
- poorly timed
- psychoanalytic

When you are the receiver of feedback, how you act and what you feel inside is just as important as the things you do when you give feedback to others. Try to listen without defending yourself, asking questions only for clarification. Remember that the feedback you get is only one person's opinion. Listen carefully and then decide how much of it to accept -- anywhere from ten to ninety percent is reasonable, depending on the circumstances. If you are unsure if a criticism is justified or not, check with a number of different people, especially those you can count on to be straight with you. Then decide whether or not you should change your behavior.

ONE SOLUTION TO THE TEACHER TRAINING PROBLEM

Maggie realized that she would have to do more than talk to the teachers about effective feedback; she would have to create an atmosphere where effective feedback was monitored by the participants, rather than by herself alone. In addition, she decided, she would have to model both giving and receiving effective feedback, herself.

Maggie changed the format of lesson critique by setting up small observation and discussion groups that gave feedback to individual presenters. Each group elected a facilitator who monitored the discussion to make sure the feedback followed the rules above.

The facilitator would first ask the teacher who presented the lesson to give a self-critique, and would insist that the teachers mention both positive and negative points about their own presentations. The result was interesting. Teachers were so used to being criticized without mercy that they found it very difficult to say anything positive about their own presentations. And when they mentioned the negatives, they were so accurate that the other group members rarely had anything critical to add. This made the group discussions focus on the positive. Eventually they became support groups, which improved morale tremendously.

Maggie welcomed feedback from the participants on her new methods, for she felt this was the best way to show how the technique should work in practice. At first, the teachers found it very hard to listen to critical feedback, even effective, gentle feedback, without becoming defensive. They told Maggie that it was humiliating just to sit there without saying anything, and that sometimes they needed to explain why they had done one thing or another in their lessons.

Maggie listened quietly without saying anything. Then she thanked the teachers for their feedback and told them that she had gained a different perspective. She agreed that sometimes it is necessary to clarify why you do something that others may not agree with, but that other times it was probably good to practice just listening to another's point of view. In later evaluations, participants told Maggie, "You listen well."

7. ADULTS NEED TO COMMUNICATE THEIR FEELINGS IN CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE WAYS

Back in Togo, Chris had taken a holiday. Sunning himself on the beach with some of his old friends from training, he listened to Nancy's story of frustration with her assignment in the capital.

"It looks like a soft life," she said, "but when you can't really get close to the people you work with, you begin to feel lonely." Things had started out so well, she told Chris. Everyone was so welcoming and easy to work with. She had been facilitating a group that was interested in turning vacant land into community gardening plots. But recently, for no apparent reason, people she thought were her friends had stopped laughing and joking with her the way they used to. Maybe she was just becoming a boring person, she told Chris. In the last group meeting, two of the women had actually put their heads down on the table and gone to sleep!

Nancy had tried asking the group to tell her what was wrong. She was ready to listen to feedback, she had decided. Even if she had done something really awful, she wanted to know about it. But everyone continued to smile politely and say there was no problem. The only thing she could think of that *might have offended people was a little discussion she'd had with a few of the group over a beer after work. They had insisted that AIDS had originated in the U.S., while Nancy had read that it had come from Africa. It didn't matter where it came from, she told Chris, the point was to get rid of it. But still she had found it strange that her friends would not listen to the facts.*

Anyway, Nancy concluded, if her friends had been offended by something she had said or done, the only way they were going to get back on track in their working group was through open communication in an atmosphere of trust. If they only would express their feelings, she told Chris, everything would be so much easier.

THEORY: CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON PERSONALITY: ERIK ERIKSON

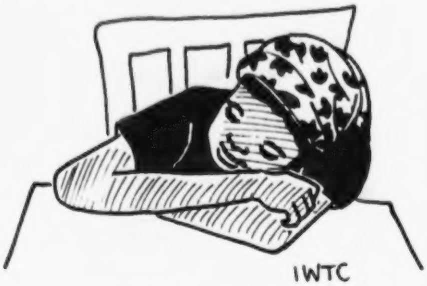
Erikson, a psychoanalyst trained in the Freudian tradition in Vienna in the 1930s, immigrated to America in the days preceding World War II and soon had the opportunity to visit both the Sioux in North Dakota and the Yurok Indians on the Oregon coast. In his observations of mothers and children, and in discussions with chiefs and traditional healers he began to put together a theory of cultural influences on child rearing and personality that would alter psychologists' perceptions of human nature.

Unlike Freud's followers, who believed that deviant behavior -- that is, deviant from the upper class Viennese norm -- was the result of neurosis, Erikson pointed out that what seemed deviant in one society often made sense in a different cultural context. Everything in the environment molded a child, Erikson said; the history of the society, its geography, the goals and aspirations of its members, the way its children are touched and fed and carried about, the way people think and talk, the imagery they use, the myths they have developed.

Because of environmental influences on personality, "normal" or expected expressions of emotions in one culture may be very different in another, and this difference may be the result of the ways children grow up and what their society expects of them. At the same time, all human beings are alike in feeling basic emotions. Anger, for example, occurs in all societies, but its modes of expression may vary as much as its music or cuisine.

In Nancy's group, anger was expressed in a way that in the American context might be labelled "passive aggressive." Instead of loud arguments, or swearing or other outbursts of temper, adults resorted more often to pouting, or stony silence, or lethargy, or even tearful pleading or extreme obsequiousness, especially to superiors.

Such behavior was not considered particularly unprofessional or "childish" as it might seem in an American context. These forms of passive resistance are approved ways of expressing anger in Togo that have developed in response to a traditionally hierarchical society with its clear lines of authority, its constant injunctions to children to be silent and immobile, the cultural necessity of living together in very close quarters, and the expectation that group solidarity and smooth relations should override what some individual person may feel inside.



In the light of these cultural differences, Nancy's expectation that real progress would be made when people simply expressed their true feelings was perhaps unrealistic. Americans are open because of our social context: our tradition of individual liberty, our historical rejection of British and European hierarchies and formalities, our pioneer and cowboy mystique and more recently, because of the human potential movement which encourages communication through self-expression.

As Nancy had guessed, her Togolese friends had been insulted by the touchy subject she had brought up over beer. It was not the first time that Nancy's objectivity had made them uncomfortable. At first, they had shown their displeasure by simply not shaking hands with Nancy as often as they had before. But Nancy, thinking that their greater informality was a sign of intimacy as it was at home, paid no attention to the signals of her colleagues that the relationship was in trouble.

This lack of response from Nancy further fanned the flames, and the group began to show their resentment by ignoring Nancy's attempts to lead discussions, even, as she had pointed out, by going to sleep during meetings. What in an American context might have been expressed as open resentment and active discomfort, here was manifested by more subtle, passive methods that were perfectly normal in the cultural context.

Although Nancy's group eventually got over their hurt feelings and began working together again, Nancy remains confused and a little put off by their behavior. She is a person who needs close sharing of real feelings and the openness and trust valued by her own society. Even though a talk with her APCD helped her become aware of the reasons for the cultural misunderstanding, Nancy cannot completely accept the differences between the two societies. This should not be seen as a failure on Nancy's part -- it is a realistic example of how difficult it is to straddle two cultures.

ISSUE: Although adults need to (and will) communicate their feelings in the ways they have been taught by their culture, these expressions of feelings may be conditioned by a strong tradition of hierarchy. Children may speak in whispers when questioned by adults, for example, blue collar workers may bow excessively in the presence of their bosses, women may quietly accept restrictions and indignities from their fathers and husbands.

Such culturally acceptable behavior is in direct contradiction to NFE values which insist that adults treat each other as equals, and that true respect is based on the breaking down of hierarchies.

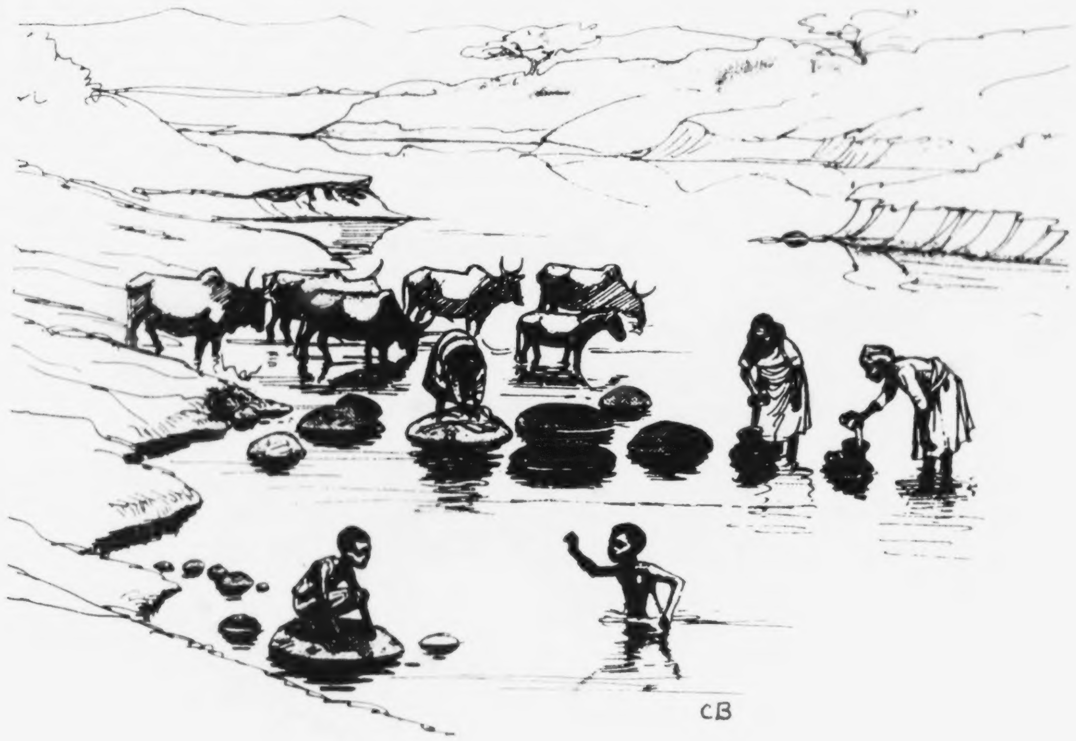
How can Volunteers deal with this contradiction in their work and daily life: how can they simultaneously show their respect for the culture and teach the equality they believe in?

8. ADULTS ARE CAPABLE OF MAKING THEIR OWN DECISIONS AND TAKING CHARGE OF THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT.

This final story is not about a Volunteer at all, but about a development worker born and raised in a traditional society in the developing world. Speaking the local language and feeling close ties with her roots in village society but having successfully struggled through the educational system and completed her higher degrees abroad, Ayawa is the mixture of North and South, traditional and modern, that inspires the title of "world citizen." And as a development worker successfully applying NFE values and methods, she has few equals. For it is easy enough to expound on NFE as a system of education or as a set of humanistic values; it is quite another thing to believe in these values so strongly that change inevitably happens.

There once was a village whose people had been inflicted with guinea worm for as long as they could remember. Now guinea worm is one of the most horrible diseases that a person could contract. A worm grows inside the body until it is sometimes a foot in length, and then it finds a place to make its way out, and slowly, slowly, emerges in all its hideousness, making the person so weak and disgusted that he falls down by the side of the road and is unable to move.

The people of this village were visited by many officials from international aid agencies and told that their problems came from the dirty river water they drank and bathed in. They listened to the officials, though they did not believe them, and accepted the offer of a new well that the officials said would cure them of this terrible affliction.



The aid officials came and installed the new well with a shiny new pump and went away happy that the villagers would no longer have to suffer from guinea worm. The villagers used the new pump for awhile, but when the rains came it became rusty and finally it broke down completely. The villagers were sad, because they liked the gift that the officials had given them, but since it was no longer of use to them, they went back to the river and carried water to their huts as before.

When the officials came back the next year to evaluate their progress in their clean water campaign, and found the pump hardened with rust, they shook their heads and said to each other, "These people do not accept responsibility for their own development. They are dependent on foreign aid like spoiled children who imagine that they only need to ask and everything will be done for them." And the officials went away, sad to discover that their money had been wasted and that their project had been a failure.

A few years later, Ayawa came back from abroad where she had been working in village health projects. She had read about this village in the agency's annual report, and since it was close to her own natal village, she decided to go and see what she could do.

Ayawa knew that the way to convince the village chief of the importance of her mission was to see him very early in the morning. She arrived the night before, slept on a mat in a hut of a friendly villager, and before the first cock crowed, she was knocking at the chief's door. Ayawa accepted the chief's elaborate greetings, offered her own, and finally came to the point; she would like to talk to the villagers about the problem of guinea worm. The chief agreed, and a meeting was arranged for later that day.

The villagers assembled and the chief told them to listen carefully to what the visitor had to say. Ayawa told them she had heard of their trouble, and asked if any of them knew where the guinea worm came from.

"The water in our village has been afflicted with an evil spirit," the villagers told her. We are extremely unlucky to have to suffer this terrible fate. But there is nothing to be done."

"You are right," said Ayawa. "There is an evil spirit inhabiting your water supply. And the next time I come I will show you what it looks like."

Ayawa went home to the capital and borrowed a microscope from the college, returned to the village, and showed the villagers the tiny guinea worm larvae in the river water.

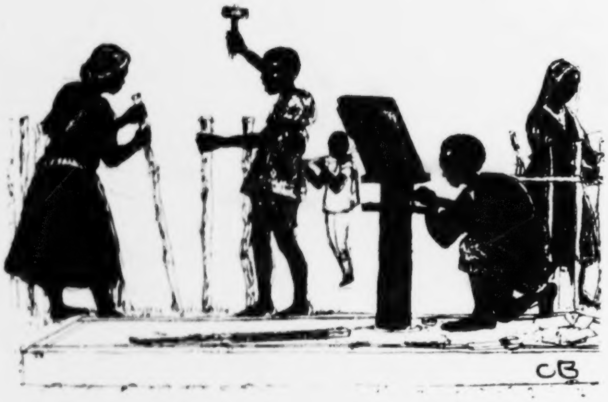
The villagers were very excited. Here was a development worker who knew something. They told Ayawa, "With your help, perhaps we can get rid of this spirit. Please tell us what to do."

Ayawa suggested that they look at all the water sources in the area of the village to see if they could find one free of the evil spirit. Together, they went around examining the water with the college microscope. The people could see for themselves that every source carried the guinea worm larvae.

Some of the villagers were discouraged. "You see, the spirit is everywhere. There is nothing we can do." But others said, "What about the well that the other officials brought us? They told us the water was better for our health, but we did not believe them. If we could get the pump working again we could examine the water and find out if they were right or not."

After much discussion, the villagers agreed this would be a good idea. They asked Ayawa to petition the aid agency for money to fix the pump, for it required new parts that were only available from overseas. But Ayawa refused. "You have everything you need among your own people to get this grant," she told them. You have your traditional village committees, you have a chief, you have some literate community members who have been to high school and can write in the language the development officials can understand. It is up to you to do it yourselves."

Finally the villagers were convinced. They put together a grant application, and a few months later had received their aid. Soon the pump was repaired. They tested the water, and sure enough, it was free of the evil spirit. The villagers were happy, but still cautious. "We will be careful to use only this water for a few seasons," they said, "and see if our health improves."



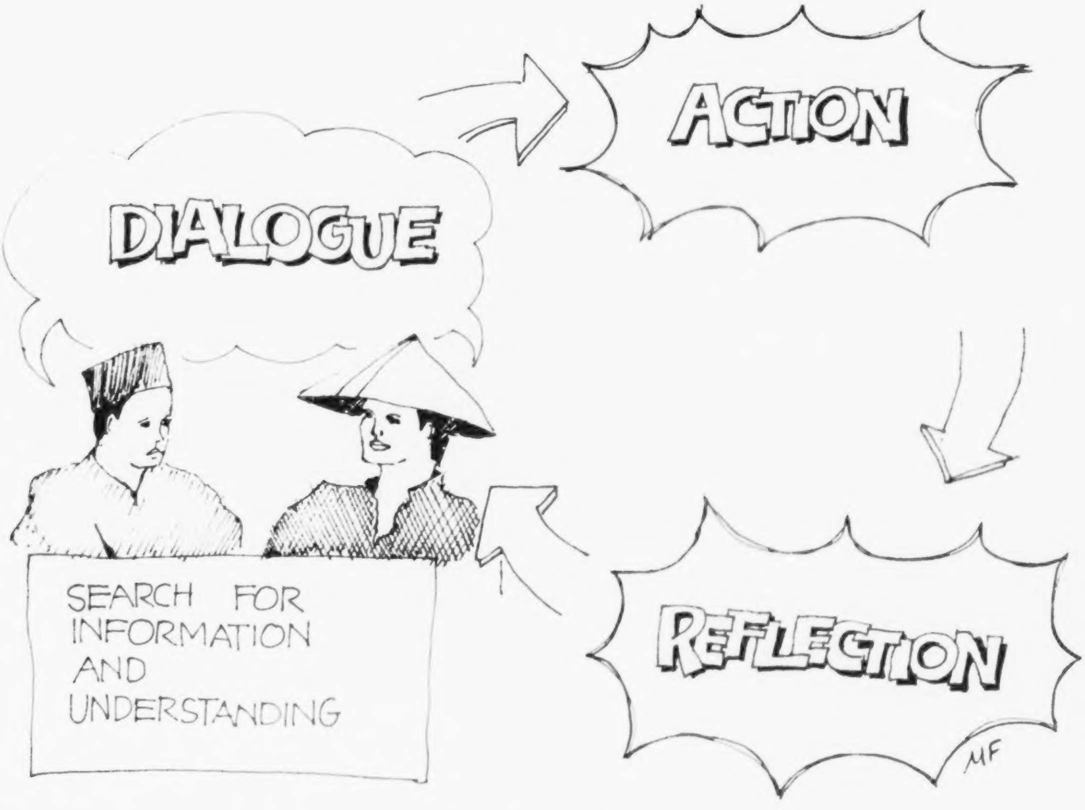
The journal of Ayawa's small aid organization shows a graph of the change in the incidence of guinea worm in this village. In the first year the number of cases diminished from 928 to 534. Three years later only seven cases of guinea worm were to be found. The villagers were so grateful that they again petitioned the agency for money, this time to buy educational materials so that they themselves could teach their children and grandchildren about the importance of clean water. Never again would they have to suffer from the horror of guinea worm.

THEORY: PAULO FREIRE

Freire is a radical Brazilian educator who was jailed in the 1960's for his literacy methods that were then considered unorthodox and dangerous (though after some years of exile he was named Minister of Education). Freire speaks about a state of magical consciousness in which uneducated people often view the world. When people do not understand the true cause and effect relationships behind events, Freire says, they resort to magical explanations to ease their uncertainty. Because they feel more at the mercy of the natural world than in control of it, they stubbornly insist that they have no choice but to submit to a superior power.

But, Freire insists, all human beings are capable of reflection and are able to look at their lives objectively and critically. All people are capable of leaving magical consciousness behind and attaining a state of critical consciousness, in which they are active transformers of the world rather than objects that suffer the whims of fate, or the gods, or the evil spirits.

How do people attain critical consciousness?


ACTION
DIALOGUE
SEARCH FOR INFORMATION AND UNDERSTANDING
REFLECTION
MF

- Through **DIALOGUE**, an empathetic communication with someone who sees critically. When villagers and an outsider are linked by love, hope and mutual trust, says Freire, they can join each other in an educational endeavor.

- Through a **MUTUAL SEARCH FOR UNDERSTANDING**, characterized by joint questioning, testing, and decision making.

- Through **ACTION**, by which villagers are able to transform their world, thereby becoming fully human.

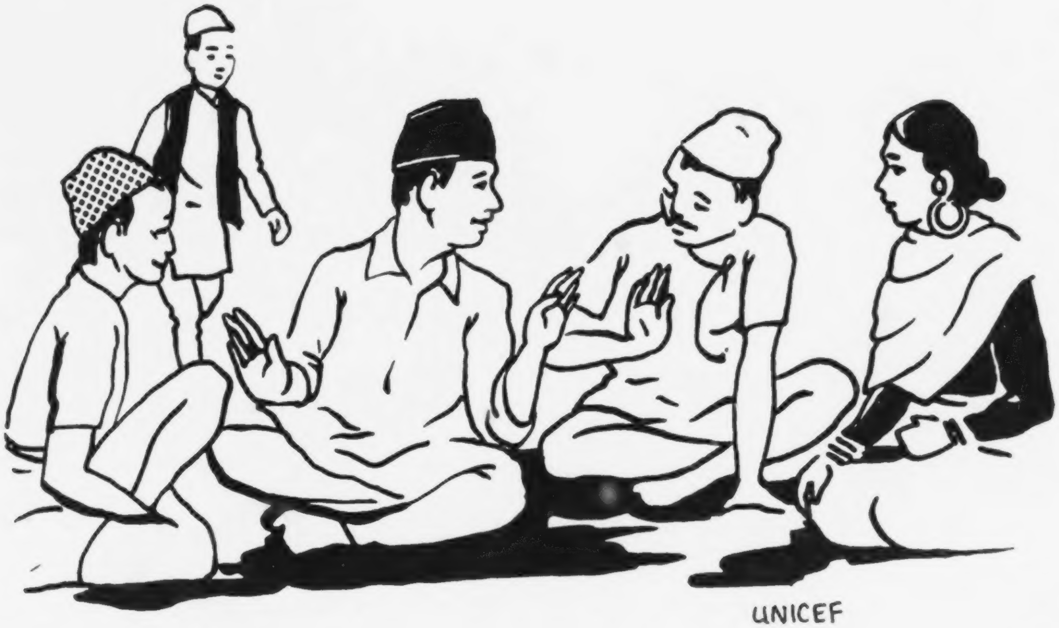
- Through **REFLECTION**, a critical, objective re-ordering of their former perceptions.

This cycle of action, reflection and search for new information is nonformal education in its best sense. It is rare. But it represents an ideal we all can strive for.

CHAPTER 4

HELPING PEOPLE IDENTIFY THEIR NEEDS

* *Who should define what people need?*
* *How can Volunteers observe and question people to begin to understand their needs?*
* *What are some techniques Volunteers can use to help people identify their own needs?*



UNICEF

Chris had come to pre-service training in Togo with an outsider's view of the needs of the village people. He saw the problem of deforestation from the perspective of an environmentalist whose first concern was the conservation of firewood and the fragile soil of people's lands.

The people in the village, however, had an insider's view of their own needs and problems. Chris had not yet asked them their opinions, and so, he did not see the problem from their point of view. If he had tried some of the techniques in this chapter he might begin to understand that the villagers have quite a different view of their own needs. They might mention, for example, that they have no time to plant trees, for they need all hands for the grain harvest, and as Afiba's co-wife had pointed out to her, that there is really no need for a new style of cookstove when the old style had suited their grandmothers and great grandmothers just fine.

Is an outsider's or an insider's view of people's needs more accurate?

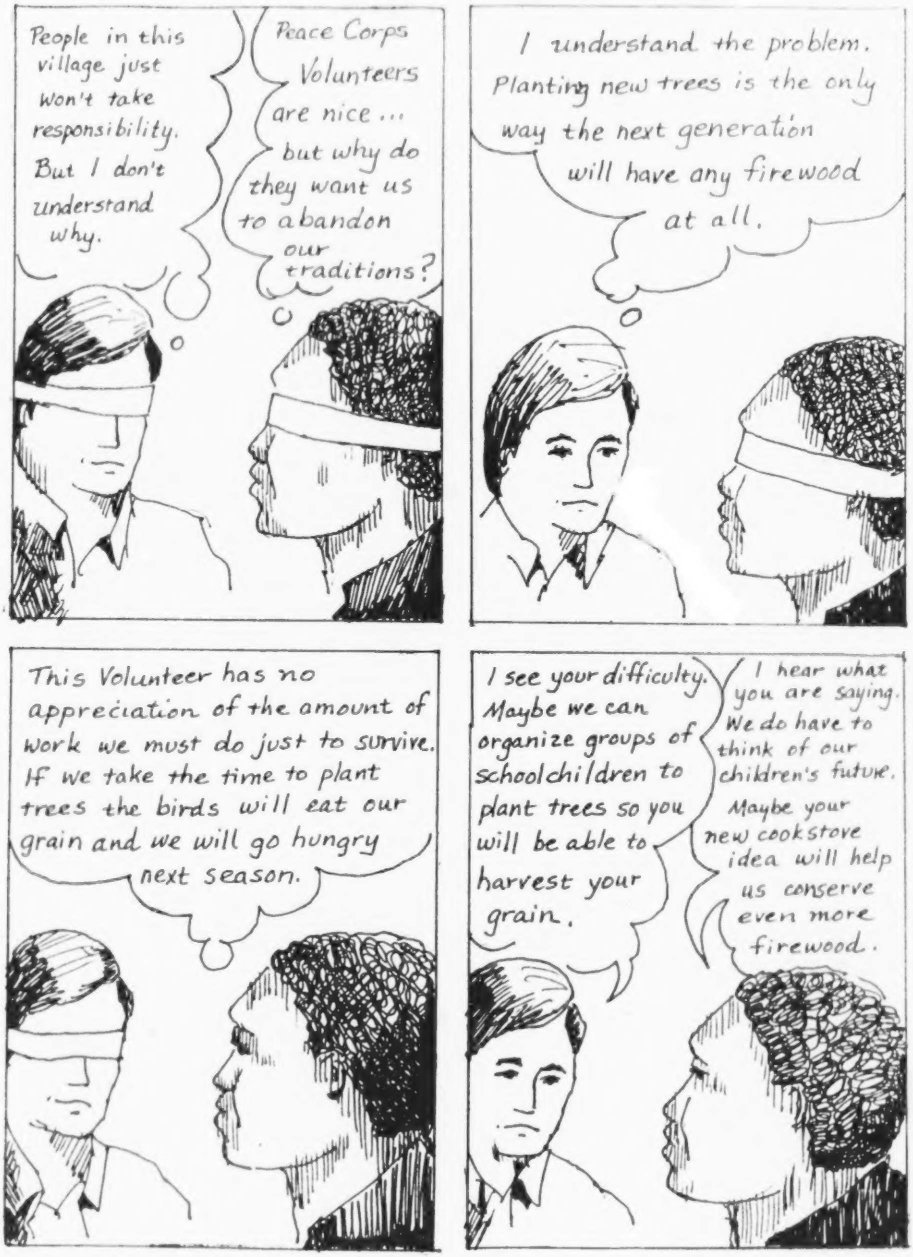
Maybe from a Western perspective Chris did know the villagers' needs better than they did in the long run. After all, Chris had the benefit of sixteen years of education and access to books on the latest technology designed specifically for the problems of developing nations. But if he came to tell people to change traditions they had been practicing for centuries, would they listen to him?

Development workers have found that even when an outsider's views are more logical (which they aren't always) and even when an outsider's methods are more efficient (which they aren't always), projects work best when insiders determine their own needs.

People who traditionally have felt ignored, or put down, or helplessly dependent on fate feel a boost of self-confidence when they finally are able to speak with dignity about their own perceptions and their own problems. And when people have the experience of being listened to, they may find themselves able to listen to another's point of view as well.

On the next page is an adaptation of Johari's window, a device developed by psychologists Joe Luft and Harry Ingham to illustrate different states of interpersonal awareness. Applied to Chris's situation, it shows how both the Volunteer and the villager can be blind or open to each other's perceptions.

INSIDER - OUTSIDER VIEWS

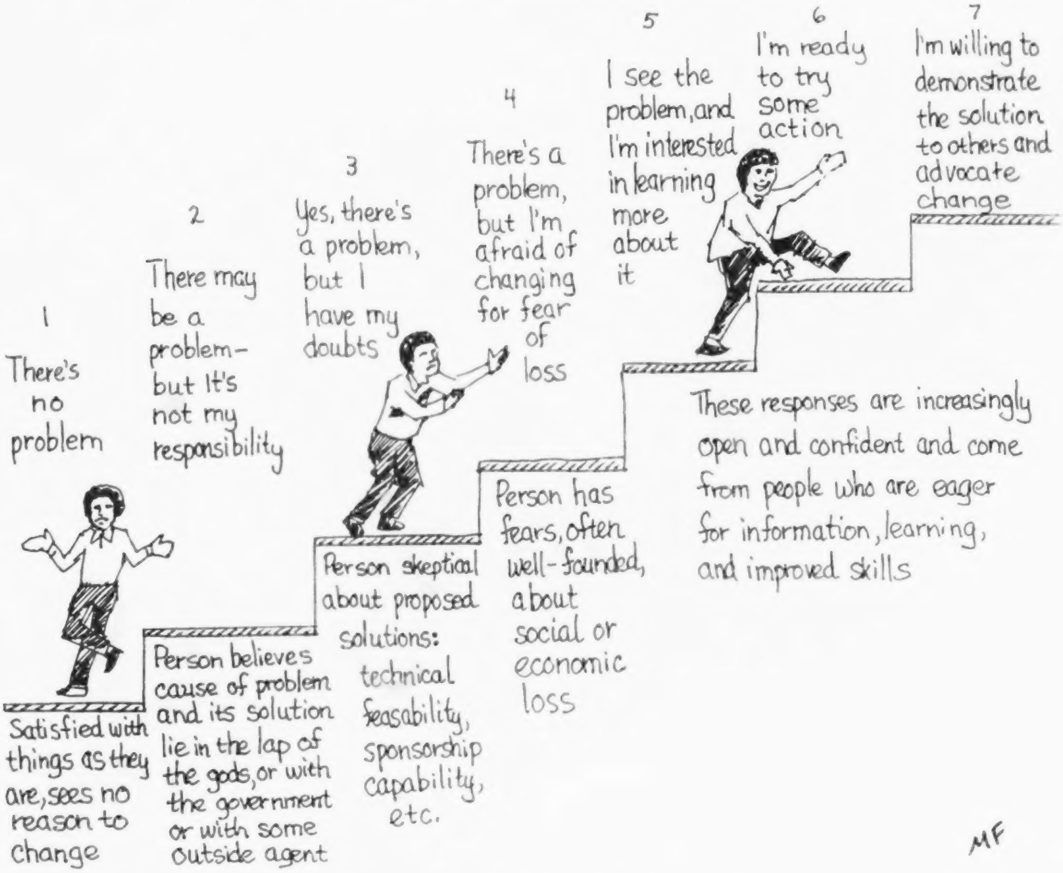

People in this village just won't take responsibility. But I don't understand why.
Peace Corps Volunteers are nice ... but why do they want us to abandon our traditions?
I understand the problem. Planting new trees is the only way the next generation will have any firewood at all.
This Volunteer has no appreciation of the amount of work we must do just to survive. If we take the time to plant trees the birds will eat our grain and we will go hungry next season.
I see your difficulty. Maybe we can organize groups of schoolchildren to plant trees so you will be able to harvest your grain.
I hear what you are saying. We do have to think of our children's future. Maybe your new cookstove idea will help us conserve even more firewood.

(Based on a similar adaptation in Lyra Srinivasan's Practical Ways of Involving People: A Manual for Training Trainers in Participatory Techniques)

Unfortunately, it is not always a simple matter to ask people's opinion of their own needs and trust that they will come up with one. People who have little experience with positive, effective community action may be reluctant, at first, to identify problems. They may deny that a problem exists at all. They may lack confidence in the feasibility of the proposed solution. They may fear the social or economic risks of being first to adopt a new idea.

This chart from participatory development trainer Lyra Srinivasan shows various stages of people's resistance to change that Volunteers may encounter, both in their service to people in developing countries -- and probably in their own lives as well.

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE CONTINUUM


1
There's no problem
Satisfied with things as they are, sees no reason to change
2
There may be a problem- but It's not my responsibility
Person believes cause of problem and its solution lie in the lap of the gods, or with the government or with some outside agent
3
Yes, there's a problem, but I have my doubts
Person skeptical about proposed solutions: technical feasability, sponsorship capability, etc.
4
There's a problem, but I'm afraid of changing for fear of loss
Person has fears, often well-founded, about social or economic loss
5
I see the problem, and I'm interested in learning more about it
6
I'm ready to try some action
7
I'm willing to demonstrate the solution to others and advocate change
These responses are increasingly open and confident and come from people who are eager for information, learning, and improved skills
MF

(From Lyra Srinivasan's Practical Ways of Involving People: A Manual for Training Trainers in Participatory Techniques

Try using this chart to understand the problem of the following Volunteer. Work with a group if you can.

WHO SHOULD DECIDE WHAT PEOPLE NEED?

A Volunteer writes from the field:

I learned a new word in French today: "penible." This combination of pain and fatigue describes perfectly the endless meetings I have to sit through with the officials from the Ministry of Education and the pre-school teachers I'm supposed to be working with.

The Ministry officials continue to want me to come up with money for new preschool buildings no matter how often I tell them that I haven't any. The teachers not only want money from me for new buildings, they also want money for new toys from the Ministry. The Ministry claims they can't supply any money and that the teachers are lazy for not making the toys themselves.

I want to give teachers the support and encouragement to make the toys on their own and forget about the buildings for the moment, even though they are leaky and decrepit. But the teachers are so depressed by the Ministry's put-downs that nothing is happening.

- Who says who needs what?
- Where are each of the parties on the Resistance to Change Continuum?
- Whose perception of needs is the most accurate?
- What should the Volunteer do?

Governments and development workers address the thorny problem of who should decide what people need in different ways. The examples in Chapter 2 illustrate three approaches to needs assessment. They range along a continuum, from the Swaziland building project, where the local women determined their needs themselves ... to the Guatemalan health classes where the needs were initially determined for the group, but where the women took control of stating their needs and proposing solutions as time went on ... to the Indonesian family planning project that was initiated by the government without consulting the people at all.

Development projects seem to work best and last the longest when they come from the people. But pure bottom-up participation is rare, and as a Volunteer you must deal with realities as well as ideals. You should probably use a variety of techniques to both determine what the problem seems to be from your point of view, and to encourage the people themselves to say how they perceive their world.

The remainder of this chapter will describe techniques you can use to learn more about the people's needs and to help them determine their own needs. Each technique mentioned below is explained in more detail on the pages indicated.

In Swaziland, Mark started by making his own personal observations (p. 57) and by informal discussion (p. 59) with group members and community leaders. He saw an obvious need for a new building, and suggested it when he talked with the women's group about their needs. The fact that everyone thought it was a good idea was probably evidence that Mark's perception of the need was correct, but Mark took care not to simply announce the problem and his proposed solution. He facilitated group discussion (p. 124), participated in traditional community meetings and was patient with an unusually long process of debate -- long, that is, from the viewpoint of his own cultural context.

In Guatemala, Sarah did an informal community survey (p. 64) by looking at how all aspects of community life are involved in health problems. Guided group discussion then led her women's group in the general direction of her original perceptions. Finally, using the problem tree (p. 65) technique she engaged the curiosity and creativity of the group in finding the causes of problems for themselves and suggesting solutions.

Other NFE techniques that may be useful in helping groups identify problems or understanding the problems from the people's point of view are: interviewing (p. 60), brainstorming/prioritizing (p. 69), and the balloon exercise (p. 67). Try combining these techniques to see the clearest picture of the needs of groups and individuals you may be working with during your service.

OBSERVATION TECHNIQUES
(and ways to think about your observations)

Whenever you come into any new situation you naturally start observing, comparing, analyzing, trying to make sense of what you see. These processes are naturally heightened when you first arrive in a new culture where things may seem strange or confusing at first.

Because it is so important to understand the complexities of your new situation yourself before helping people take any kind of action, it is a good idea to begin to train yourself to observe and reflect with more precision. The following techniques, borrowed from anthropologists, biologists, novelists and poets, will help you see more clearly. Then, with the new understanding you gain from your observations, you can begin to help others determine their needs.

If you are trying to understand village agricultural practices, for example, you might start by observing them in a number of different ways.

1. SEQUENTIAL REPORTING

Write down exactly what happens as it is happening. Try to be as "objective and "scientific" as possible. Avoid interpreting events or making judgments. Sit in an unobtrusive spot with a notebook and record as many details as possible, including their sequence and timing. Suggestions: Try writing exactly what a woman does for twenty minutes as she plants rice seedlings, or the activities of a group of farmers dividing a communal sack of seed, or fifteen minutes in the life of a herd boy.

By forcing yourself to focus on details that you normally ignore, questions will emerge that you can later follow up with interviews and other kinds of observations.

2. REPORTING OF SELECTIVE THEMES

After doing a number of detailed sequential observations, try following a theme that interests you. Your observations about women planting rice might make you wonder about backaches, for example, or the occurrence of water borne diseases coming from the flooded paddy, or the percentage of the overall farm work that is done by women. Choose a theme or question and write short notes about it whenever you learn something about it. If you are looking at how much agricultural work women do, you might list every farm activity you see them engaged in and describe those activities. Continue to try to be as "objective" or "disinterested" as possible.

3. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF AN EVENT

You may witness an interesting incident when you don't have your notebook handy, or when pulling out pencil and paper would appear insensitive. Train yourself to remember as many details as possible to write down later. For example, if you see a woman harnessing cattle or water buffalo in a culture where women don't ordinarily handle animals, mentally note everything about the scene: the time of day, the clothes she was wearing, her ease or discomfort in working with the animals, what she does after they are harnessed. These details will help you question an informant more intelligently later about how to interpret what you saw. (A small clue such as the color of the woman's clothing might indicate why she is doing something unusual -- in some cultures, a widow wears a particular color for the rest of her life.)

4. SUBJECTIVE OBSERVATION

Here you can dispense with the timing, counting, and recording of details that bore you and try to capture things as a novelist or a poet would: feelings, relationships, beauty, sadness, the setting and atmosphere. The color of new rice seedlings at sunrise, the grief of a buffalo driver when his beast collapses and dies on the roadside, these things cannot be captured by breaking them down into details and statistics. Use care in your interpretations, though, and draw on the knowledge and skills you have gained in doing the previous observations so as not to jump to conclusions.

PROCESSING YOUR OBSERVATIONS

Observations alone are not enough, of course. They must be processed or thought about somehow in order to yield insight and understanding. You might mull over what you have seen in different ways, through letters home, or perhaps by keeping a journal of freewriting, a sort of stream of consciousness record of whatever is on your mind.

Try writing some free-form poetry about an incident, or sketching it in pencil or charcoal, even if you have not done much of this before; new forms of expression sometimes bring new perceptions.

Keeping a scrapbook of newspaper clippings, photos, and journal entries about a particular theme may also help you process your observations and suggest questions to ask in conversation and interviews.

While you won't necessarily have immediate use for some of the information you have gathered, reviewing it later will help you make sense of the observations as a whole.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEWING

Talking with a great variety of people and asking friendly, culturally appropriate questions can yield much useful information. If you ask questions calling for a specific response (What is the population of this village? What kind of leaves are used in cooking here?) some people may feel intimidated and embarrassed if they don't know the answers you seem to be quizzing them for, while others may enjoy sharing their expertise. Watch body language for signs of discomfort.

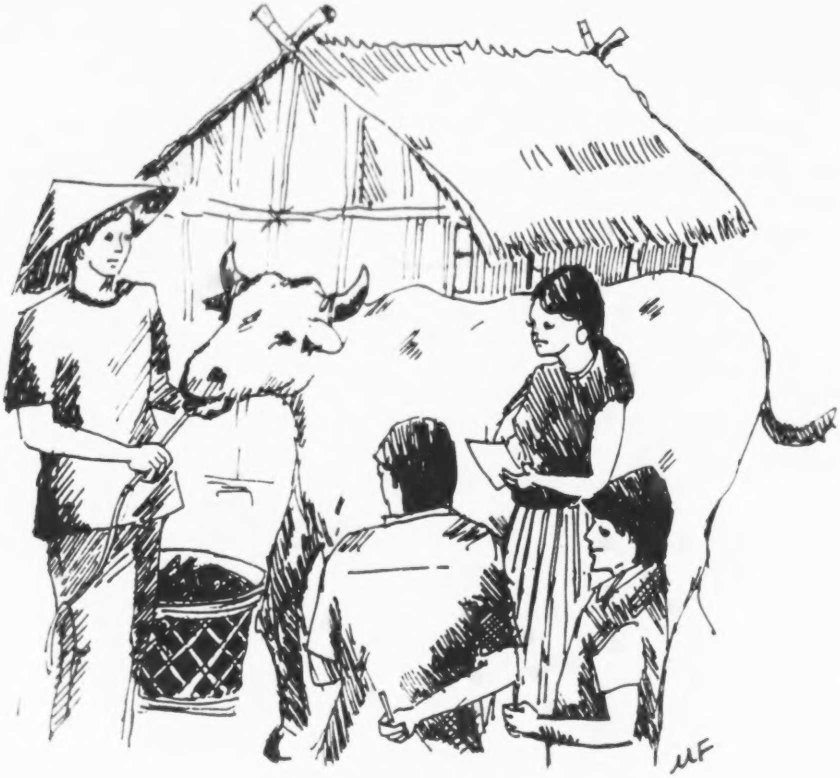
Some villagers may have difficulty answering general questions (What foods are usually given to children? What is grown by farmers in this area?) Instead, ask questions relating to their concrete experience (What does your child eat daily? What vegetables do you grow in your backyard?)

Questions calling for an opinion (What do you think of the plan to build a new well? Do you think it is a good idea to vaccinate all school children?) may be politically sensitive. Save these questions until you feel you know the local people well, and do not press people for answers if you find them being politely evasive. This may be their way of telling you that your questions are inappropriate.

Finding local people who will give you specific information may be important both to show respect to community authorities and to get a more complete view of the situation. Traditional birth attendants, for example, may be able to talk about contraceptive practices where others will not, and local health officials may have access to useful documentation that might take you months to collect on your own. Even children may provide useful information about school-related matters, or act as candid translators for their parents who may speak a local language you have not yet mastered.

Remember, though, that each person's view is likely to be very different from that of the next. When discussing the problem of children's malnutrition, for example, one Volunteer found that while everyone she talked to agreed it was a problem, there was much disagreement about its cause. A doctor claimed it was caused by the ignorance of the people due to cultural biases against modern medicine. The traditional healer said it was the invasion of foreign culture that damaged children's health. Teachers felt that the high illiteracy rate prevented parents from reading about nutrition, gardening and better health practices. The agricultural extension agent said it was the lack of inexpensive appropriate technology that could help people produce food year-round instead of just in the rainy season. An official from a local aid agency insisted that the children's malnutrition was caused by endemic intestinal parasites because there was no clean water supply in the village.

Although each of the people the Volunteer talked to understood that many factors contributed to the problem, each person's perspective was different depending on their professional interest and personal bias.



INTERVIEWS

The village chief, the leaders of women's groups, the local Ministry officials and other professionals may be more amenable to an interview than to informal questioning. Interviews are useful with villagers as well because they are more structured than ordinary conversation and therefore yield more comparable data. Be sure to ask people for permission to quote them and inform them clearly of your purpose in interviewing them.

Before you conduct an interview, try to find out the culturally sensitive way to go about it. For example, in the culture in which you work:

- Should you avoid eye contact, or is it more polite to look frankly at a person?
- How formally or informally should you dress when doing an interview?
- How much time should you spend on greetings and initial chit-chat before beginning the interview?
- Is it appropriate to approach an elder or chief directly, or should you go through intermediaries?
- What subjects or ways of asking questions are considered indiscrete?

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

You can set up your interview in a number of different ways.

In informal interviews your questions will emerge from the context of discussion. There are no predetermined questions or wording. People sometimes feel most comfortable with this type of interview, but the information you gather may be hard to organize afterwards, especially if you are interviewing a large number of people on the same topic.

If you use an interview guide approach, you decide on the general questions and issues to be covered in advance, but determine the sequence and wording of questions during the course of the interview. For example, you may want to be sure to cover three basic questions but let the conversation range widely enough to gather unexpected interesting information or opinion.

A standardized open-ended interview is more formal. You write down the questions in advance and read them to the person you are interviewing in a natural tone of voice. The interview is open-ended in the sense that your questions allow for a variety of responses. For example: What vegetables do your family eat in the rainy season? What are the major health problems of the schoolchildren in your classes?

If you use a closed quantitative interview, you determine the possible responses in advance and ask the person to choose between several alternatives. For example: Please answer yes or no to the following questions: In the rainy season my family eats: beans? cabbage? pumpkin? This type of interview is most useful if you want to gather certain specific information in a short time.

The latter two types of interviews can also be written in the form of questionnaires for literate respondents.

WHAT TYPE OF INTERVIEW IS BEST?

This depends both on the situation and on you. If you are interviewing in a language you feel a little shaky about you might want to write down your questions in advance (as in the last two types of interviews) and check your grammar with a native speaker before trying to gather information.

Even if you feel comfortable in the local language you still might want to use a more structured approach in order to compile your information more efficiently. For example, if you need to find out what fifty families eat in the rainy season, it would be relatively easy to look at, say, the answers to question six of your interview form, and tabulate the results.

On the other hand, if you want to find out what people feel about a situation, it may be both more sensitive and more interesting if you let the interview questions arise naturally in the course of the conversation. Afterwards, when compiling the information, you will need to read the whole batch of interviews over and over again to let a global picture emerge. This can be time-consuming of course, but it will yield a rich, full picture of the range of opinions, perceptions, and styles of expression. When sharing this kind of information with others it is wise to explain that your own analysis of it will naturally be somewhat colored by your own perceptions and point of view.

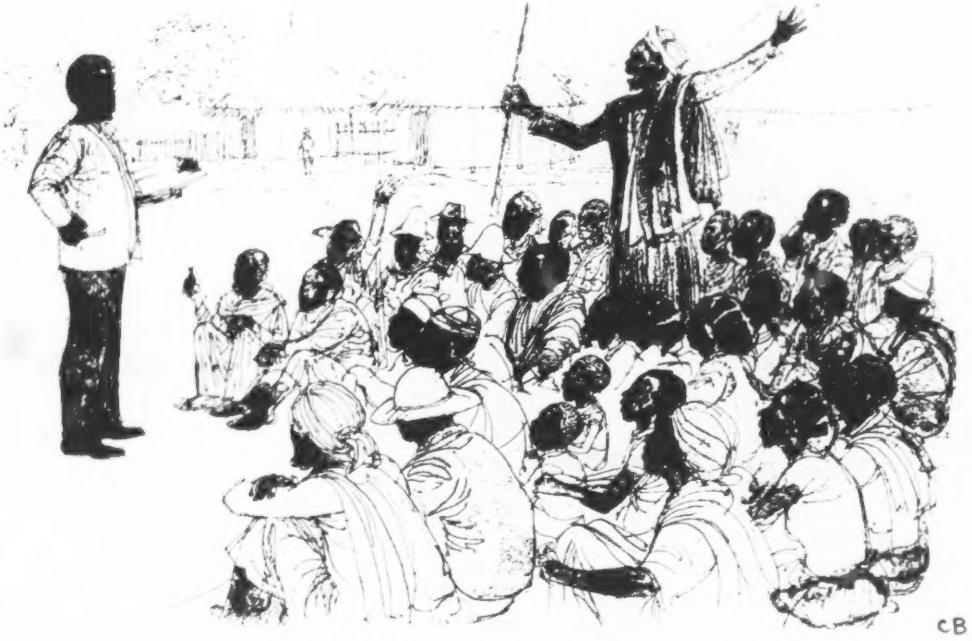
NOW THAT YOU HAVE THE INFORMATION, WHAT DO YOU DO WITH IT?

Use it for your own education -- Interview information, like detailed observations, can help you understand your host country more fully. If you have used informal interviews or an interview guide approach, typing them up or recording the most interesting bits in a journal will help you focus on what people were trying to communicate to you. You can tabulate and record information from more structured types of interviews in the form of charts or graphs, or just as trends to remember for future conversations. ("I find it interesting that according to teachers in this town, the main health problem of their students is respiratory infections.")

Use it to share with your co-workers -- Ideally, you and your counterparts will gather information together, but if you conduct interviews on your own, you may find it useful to share this new information with others -- that is, if it is new to everyone, rather than just to you. Beware of annoying Host Country Nationals by acting as an expert on their own society; even if you have found out information that is not common knowledge, people may be put off if you take on the role of expert without being asked. When in doubt, don't.

However, if you are asked to give a presentation, or if you are questioned at a meeting about the information you have been gathering, present it as concisely and accurately as possible, using notes you have taken about the data you have compiled as well as graphs or charts when they seem appropriate.

Use it to share with the people you have interviewed -- This bright idea is only recently being adopted by some researchers in education and other social sciences. The relatively new field of participatory research stresses dialogue, empathetic sharing of experience, and involvement of the people in all phases of information gathering and utilization. Such an approach is consistent with NFE values, for it involves working with people rather than treating them as research "subjects." Try to share the results of your interviewing with people at community meetings or other local forums in the oral style that the local people use themselves. You will need to observe awhile to understand the complexities of this style according to the custom in your area. In general, other cultures are much more indirect about making a point than Americans are, so try to avoid giving "the facts and nothing but the facts" as you may have been trained to do by your own society. It may be that your host country co-workers will be more effective than you in this role and should present the results of your information-gathering to the community.



COMMUNITY SURVEY - SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

In order to understand a community's needs more fully and to begin to see the complex web of connections between each sector, you might want to undertake a situational analysis. Some areas that you might want to explore to more fully understand the needs of a particular community are listed below. It is easy to get lost in a pile of data when collecting information; be sure to ask only what is most relevant and useful.

1. *The Physical Setting* -- You might create a map with natural features like hills and water sources as well as roads, utilities, transportation systems, and how natural resources are used.

2. *Who Makes Up The Community* -- Note population statistics by age, gender, educational background, school dropout rate, average literacy percentages, employment statistics, income and land ownership patterns.

3. *How the Community Works* -- Through observation, discussion, and reading of existing documentation, find out what you can about the local government, religious influences*, decision making patterns and active community organizations, the distribution of wealth, the educational facilities (traditional systems, religious, nonformal and formal schools and colleges), health problems and services, community business and income generating opportunities, the quality and extent of public services, and the history and effectiveness of community development projects and organizations.

4. *The Historical Context* -- Throughout your information gathering activities, try to gain information about local traditions, historical events and significant people in the community's history.

> * **A Note On Politics and Religion**: These areas are often sensitive and as a Peace Corps Volunteer, you must avoid asking indiscrete questions about them or discussing them with community groups. Learn about these important areas by observing the community, reading books and other documents, and talking with other Volunteers and Peace Corps staff.

You may discover, as you gather information, that other outsiders have surveyed the community before you, raising unrealistic expectations about new projects that were about to happen and improvements that were going to be made. A villager in Tamil Nadu, India, expressed it this way:

> *"We planted this coconut tree some years ago in order to provide tender coconuts to our visitors, particularly the officials from development departments. The tree has grown and is giving fruits, and many officials have quenched their thirst, but our village remains the same with no signs of progress whatsoever."* (from Shrivastava and Tandon, Participatory Training for Rural Development)

Community people are often over-surveyed, but seldom see any real benefits. Take care not to raise expectations you cannot fulfill, for people who have become disillusioned or angry about the lack of action will be harder to motivate next time.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Now that you have used the various techniques of observation and interviewing to learn more about the community and the people you work with, you are more prepared to lead a group discussion that will help people determine what kind of action they want to take. But in order for the group to get involved you will need to facilitate the meeting in ways that will foster discussion, creativity and meaningful action.

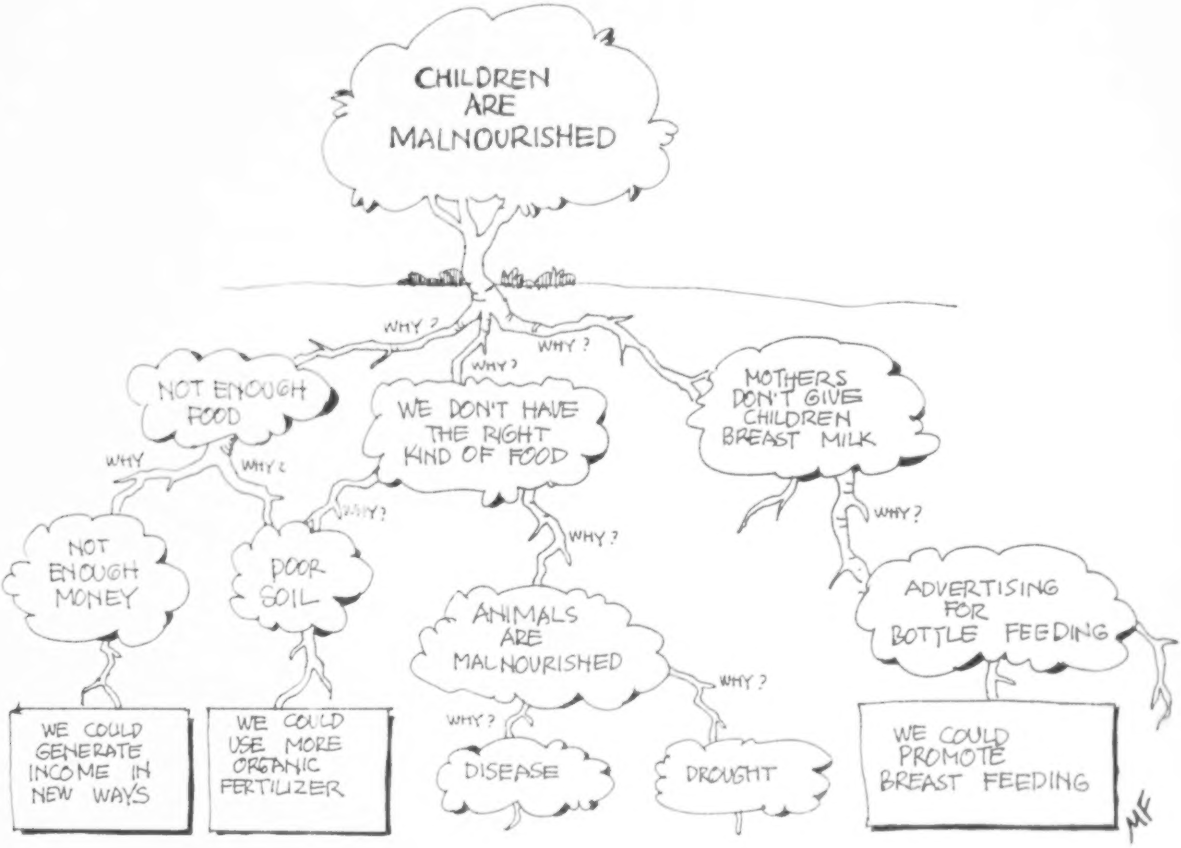
First you must avoid imposing your ideas on the group in either overt or unconscious ways. Needless to say, this is not easy, especially since by now you have a pretty good idea of what you think the problems are and probably have formed an opinion about what needs to be done. The following two techniques, the problem tree and the balloon exercise, will help put discussion and decision-making in the hands of the group. Use one or the other (not both) if your aim is getting people to examine the chain of cause and effect and propose innovative solutions to their perceived needs.

PROBLEM TREE

Suppose you are working with a group of mothers who are agreed that a major health problem for their children is malnutrition. Start by writing the problem at the top of the blackboard or sheet of paper: "Children Are Malnourished." (If members of the group are not literate, you can decide on a symbol together that stands for malnutrition -- a stick figure with a sad face, for example). Tell the group that a problem is like a tree and that the causes of the problem are like roots reaching into the ground.

Next, ask the group why they think that children don't have enough to eat. After some discussion, the women may decide that there is simply not enough food in the village, or that the right kinds of food are not available, or that mothers don't give their children breast milk long enough. Write these responses (or use appropriate symbols) as roots branching off the original problem "tree."

Now, take each of the causes in turn and ask the group why they think it is happening. The group may decide that there is not enough food in the village because people don't have enough money to buy it, or because the soil in the fields is poor. Write these responses as other roots branching off the first reasons as in the diagram. Be sure to give participants sufficient time to discuss these problems, using your diagram only to remind them of what they have discovered rather than as an end in itself.


CHILDREN ARE MALNOURISHED
WHY ?
WHY ?
WHY ?
NOT ENOUGH FOOD
WE DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT KIND OF FOOD
MOTHERS DON'T GIVE CHILDREN BREAST MILK
WHY
WHY?
WHY?
WHY ?
WHY ?
NOT ENOUGH MONEY
POOR SOIL
ANIMALS ARE MALNOURISHED
ADVERTISING FOR BOTTLE FEEDING
WHY ?
WHY ?
WE COULD GENERATE INCOME IN NEW WAYS
WE COULD USE MORE ORGANIC FERTILIZER
DISEASE
DROUGHT
WE COULD PROMOTE BREAST FEEDING
MF

Finally, when the group has discovered the complexity of the problem (and, not incidentally, how much they already know about it), ask them to suggest possible solutions and write them -- symbolically or in words, at the bottom of the problem tree. Be sure to stress that these solutions are only possibilities for action, not necessarily final decisions; this will encourage more creativity and less disagreement about what is feasible.

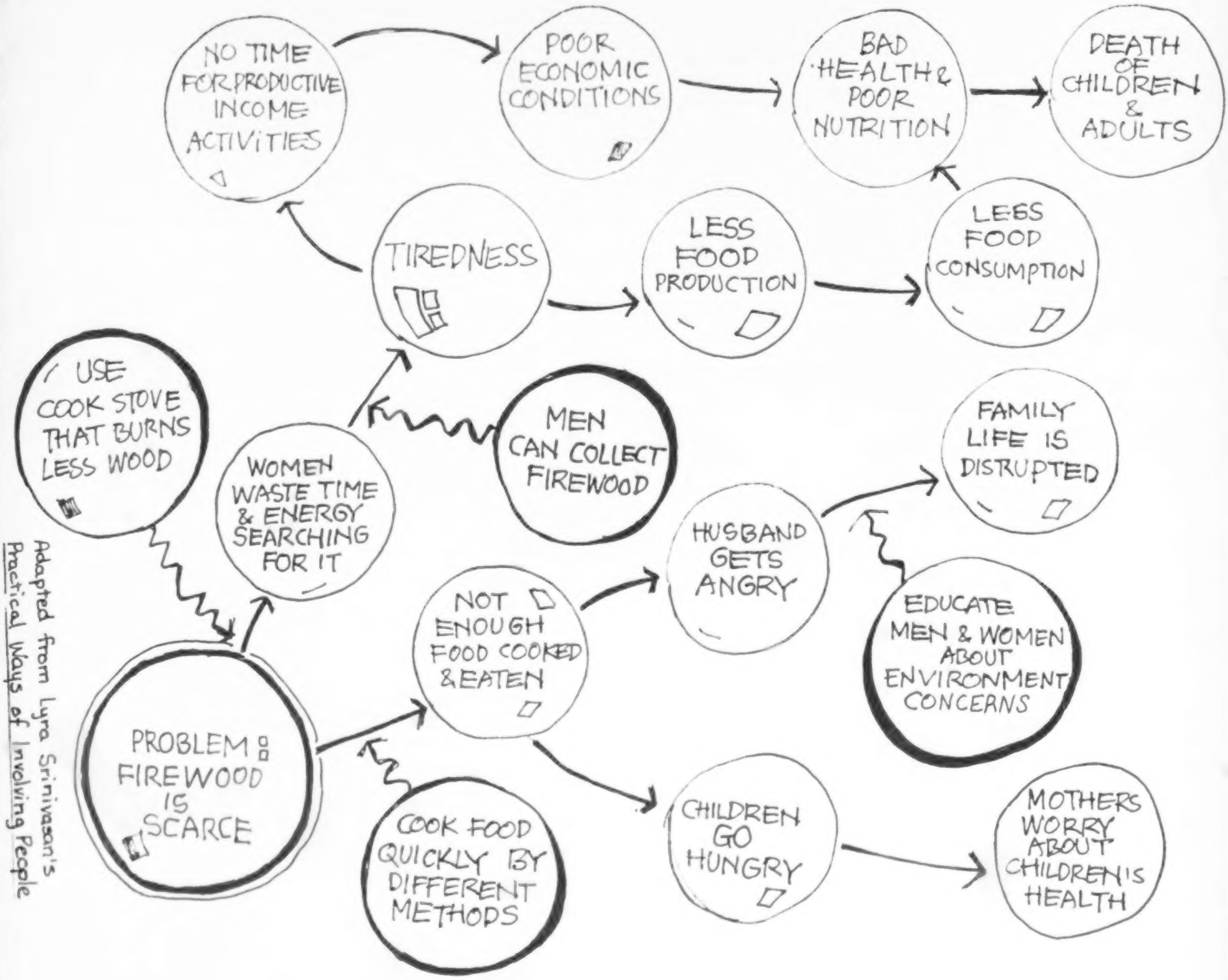
THE BALLOON EXERCISE

This exercise also starts with the group identifying a problem, this time it should be written in the left hand corner of the paper or board. Then, instead of asking the causes of the problem, participants should reflect on one or more consequences resulting from it. For each of the consequences they should draw a balloon and link it to the first. They continue looking for consequences of each of the consequences they have written, and link these with a chain of balloons. Finally, they should reflect on where the chain of negative consequences can be broken, and indicate these as in the diagram on the next page.

This exercise can be done by the large group together with the facilitator writing down what participants say, or it can be done in small groups of three or four participants, with each group coming up with their own analysis of the problem and their own proposed solutions. After they have spent some time on this exercise, the small groups can reconvene and share their balloon chains with each other.

Now that many solutions to the problem have been proposed by the group, the facilitator can list them all so the group can decide on the feasibility of each one and propose a course of action.

For non-literate groups, you might use balloons cut out of paper beforehand and masking tape to stick them on the wall as the consequences of the problem are discovered by the group. Ask participants to draw a symbol that stands for each consequence on the balloons as they are mounted on the wall. A group artist will likely emerge, amid much laughter. As the diagram on the wall gets more complex, be sure the participants remember the symbols they have chosen so that they can "read" the diagram after it is finished and find appropriate places to break the chain of negative effects.


NO TIME FOR PRODUCTIVE INCOME ACTIVITIES
POOR ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
BAD HEALTH & POOR NUTRITION
DEATH OF CHILDREN & ADULTS
TIREDNESS
LESS FOOD PRODUCTION
LESS FOOD CONSUMPTION
USE COOK STOVE THAT BURNS LESS WOOD
WOMEN WASTE TIME & ENERGY SEARCHING FOR IT
MEN CAN COLLECT FIREWOOD
FAMILY LIFE IS DISRUPTED
HUSBAND GETS ANGRY
NOT ENOUGH FOOD COOKED & EATEN
EDUCATE MEN & WOMEN ABOUT ENVIRONMENT CONCERNS
PROBLEM: FIREWOOD IS SCARCE
COOK FOOD QUICKLY BY DIFFERENT METHODS
CHILDREN GO HUNGRY
MOTHERS WORRY ABOUT CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Adapted from Lyra Srinivasan's Practical Ways of Involving People

BRAINSTORMING/PRIORITIZING

These familiar techniques can be used in many kinds of group discussions when you want to encourage creativity and contributions from all members. Remind your group of the rules of brainstorming:

- ideas should be called out at random, freely, from any participant
- no idea is silly or unimportant
- no discussion or comments on the ideas are allowed during the brainstorming phase except for purposes of clarification

If your group is unfamiliar with brainstorming and seems to be cautious about expressing creative or unusual ideas, try the Brick Exercise (p. 114) as a warm-up beforehand.

Brainstorming is usually done by listing the ideas that come up on the board or flip chart paper. For non-literate groups these memory jogs are largely unnecessary. Where people must rely on their memories for all their daily activities this facility is often highly developed. Keep written notes for yourself if you need to.

Prioritizing of ideas can be done in many different ways:

* In small groups: Each group decides on several of the ideas that have the most merit. Groups then report their opinions to the large group, giving the reasons why they have chosen the ideas they have. The large group then votes on the idea or ideas they want to pursue.

* By voting as a large group: First, the group eliminates the duplicate and less important ideas, then the group votes on each idea in turn. (You can read the ideas from your notes to non-literate groups here). The most favored ideas can then be discussed at length before a final vote is taken.

* By discussion and consensus: In cultures where group consensus is extremely important, groups are already well-versed in this process. Consensus taking is lengthy but can be fascinating to outsiders who are more familiar with quick "majority rule" voting. Volunteers who find themselves facilitating this kind of discussion might do best to stand back and observe quietly as leaders emerge and give their arguments and participants are finally persuaded to agree on a given course of action.

- By ritualized public show and later private action: Astute observers have pointed out that in some cultures, public decision making that appears to be dominated by a particular individual or group is more participatory than one might think.

  In a Senegalese village, for example, women who were supposed to be determining their own needs for income-generating activities would wait to be called on by the male chief, who would then repeat their short and seemingly overly-agreeable responses to the training team. Women who spoke up spontaneously and appeared to be participating the most actively turned out to be low caste individuals who served almost as jesters on such occasions. The women finally reached consensus by nodding and by their "enthused silence," for in this society, not to speak indicates a position of honor. After the meeting was over, the women met privately to make actual decisions and creatively analyze options, risks and rewards.

These examples of decision making structures in other cultures suggest that Volunteers should take great care to observe what is really happening before too hastily imposing modern NFE techniques and strategies for participation where traditional methods do just as well -- or better.

HINTS FOR FACILITATING A GROUP DISCUSSION

Being sensitive to cultural norms does not mean you need to give up being American. These typically (but far from exclusively) American techniques will often charm a cross-cultural audience.

- Be positive. Smile.

- Communicate your enthusiasm for the meeting, the topic, and the people involved.

- Communicate your genuine interest in each individual's contribution to the discussion.

- Get to the point and stick to it.

- Write legibly and quickly.

- Speak loud enough for everyone to hear easily and articulate your words, especially if you -- or the participants -- are struggling with a second language.

- Encourage discussion between group members instead of between members and yourself. You can do this by redirecting questions ("What do you think about that, Mr.Gomez?") or by nodding and expressing interest rather than giving your own opinion.

- Let participants know when you have learned something new from them.

- Come prepared. Bring paper and markers or roll-up blackboards (see page 134) and chalk.

- Practice the techniques you will use beforehand so you don't get too nervous or lose your train of thought.

- Keep the meeting from degenerating into lengthy argument or discussion that is off the topic. It takes some practice to balance facilitator control with group participation. Use your tone of voice, your energy or "presence" and your interested silence to keep the group focused.

Helping people determine their needs is not easy. You will most likely have to develop skills that take a lifetime to master -- skills in group facilitation, in patience and control of your emotions, in listening, in being acutely aware of your effect on others. But if you spend time working on these skills and use them to discover how people see their real needs, the next steps will not only be easier, they will be heading you in the right direction.

CHAPTER 5

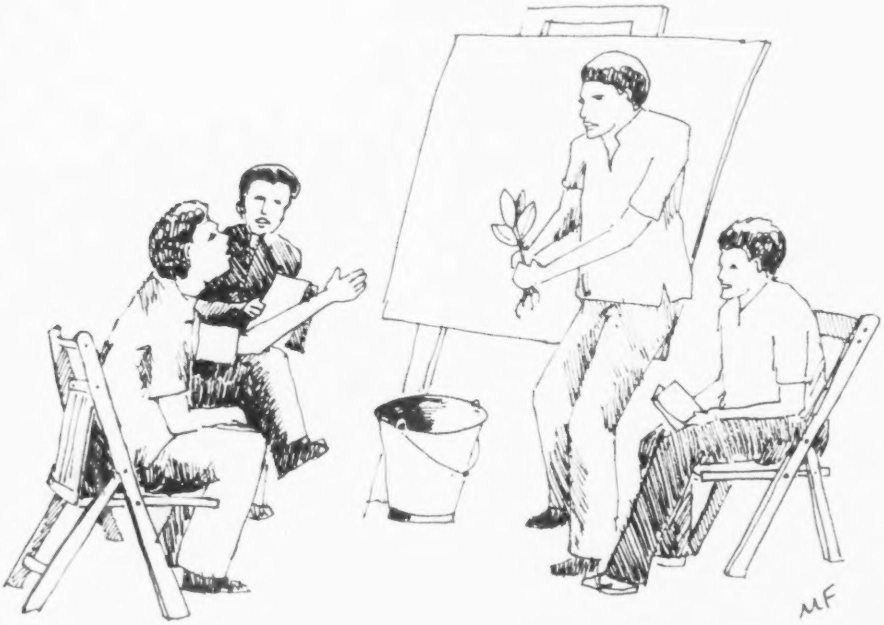
PLANNING

- * *Why is planning with people critical to your work in NFE?*
- * *What are the essential steps in planning for long term goals?*
- * *What techniques can groups use to plan together?*
- * *How and why should groups keep records of their activities?*

Nobody is perfect, and Chris, of course, was no exception. Somehow, he glossed over learning the needs assessment skills in the last chapter. Maybe he was more of a concrete experience person than a reflective observer and was so eager to get started, to do something, that he didn't see the point of spending time doing careful observation, or drawing people out and discovering how they perceived their own needs. For whatever reason, Chris plunged right in, full of friendly enthusiasm.

Though he didn't want to impose his way of thinking on people -- he had learned that much -- he still wanted to convince them that his ideas were really terrific. "Try it, you'll like it!" he told people with a grin, whether it was a solar vegetable dryer or a new system for washing dishes. He even translated this slogan into the local language, which amused his neighbors no end. But even though Chris was uninformed about what people really thought and needed and struggled with in their daily lives, the funny thing was that most people responded quite positively to him.

When Chris started work at his site, he had met his counterpart, an agricultural extension agent who quickly became enthusiastic about Chris's tree planting idea. During the first few months when Chris was getting settled in his village, the two of them visited other extension agents in the area and began to discuss a scheme to involve local school children in planting trees.



While Chris would have liked to begin concrete planning immediately, several of the extension agents insisted that they could not proceed without the approval of the villagers. They recognized that the success of a tree planting project involving children would depend upon the support and cooperation of the adults of the village.

At a general community meeting, Chris's counterpart presented the tree planting idea and received a cautiously positive response. A decision was made at the meeting to appoint several village leaders as community representatives to work with the extension agents in planning the project.

While the tree planting project looked like it was getting started, the new cookstoves that Chris had learned to make in training only seemed to amuse the village women. Try as he might, his explanations in the local language, accompanied by a great many earnest gestures always drew a crowd, but never succeeded in gaining the women's serious attention. Finally, Chris decided to simply build a fuel-efficient stove in the courtyard of the compound he lived in, and use it for his own cooking that he did everyday.

Sure enough, after a few weeks the young women who had been so entertained by his urgent explanations now seemed to Chris to be quite impressed by the amount of heat that his stove could generate in a short time with very little fuel. Soon they began to hint that they would like to learn how to build stoves like this themselves.

Chris was now under the impression that the local people had determined their needs and decided what they wanted to do. In fact, as we have seen in Chapter 3 (p. 26), the villagers still had quite a different view of the situation. The women in particular were enigmatic about their real reasons for participating. Chris, who was overjoyed with the thought that things were really beginning to happen, didn't pause to analyze the villagers' response to his ideas.

Chris was now working with two very different groups of people. One group was composed of village leaders and college educated extension agents, most of whom were older and quite a bit more experienced than himself and rather formal in their behavior. The other was a group of five young illiterate village women who continued to tease him at every opportunity.

Chris decided that it was time to sit down with each group and help them plan how they would meet their goals. Even though Chris had not had the patience for a careful needs assessment, he could see the importance of planning with people rather than for them. He knew how it felt to have others --

friends, parents, teachers, -- making plans for you, and so he wasn't about to impose that experience on anybody else.

When he thought about it, he realized that the extension agents, village leaders and the women had different but relevant technical knowledge and experience accomplishing tasks in groups. The agricultural extension agents had learned these things in school and on the job, while the village leaders owed their positions in part to their ability to work effectively with groups. The women were well versed in local knowledge -- where to find the best clay for stove-making, for example, and how to wash and process it -- and they had a lifetime of experience working with other women to accomplish tasks together.

What each group lacked, Chris discovered, were certain management planning tools that could add efficiency and smooth functioning to projects that were completely new to them.

Tools like these, for use with both villagers and experienced professionals, are included in this chapter and in books in the reference section at the end of this Manual. Use what seems applicable to your group to carry out the planning together, or read through this section simply to get an overview of how NFE planning works.

All planning involves the same three basic steps:

1. **Deciding where you are going** - determining what you want to accomplish and the feasibility of doing so
2. **Figuring out how to get there** - putting the steps in order in a time frame, determining roles and responsibilities, and deciding how to gain support of the community
3. **Keeping track of how you are doing** - keeping financial records, writing reports, getting feedback and using it to revise your plan

1. PLANNING: DECIDING WHERE YOU ARE GOING

SETTING GOALS

After group members determine their needs and decide what they want to accomplish, they should write a general goal (or goals) for their project.

Goals are general statements of what the group is trying to accomplish overall.

Chris's group of village leaders and agricultural extension agents decided the major goal of their project was:

> ***To involve local people in the reforestation of the lands surrounding their village.***

Stating goals helps the group clarify its philosophy, or what it is about the project that is most important to them. Chris's group debated writing their first goal this way:

> *To contribute to the reforestation of the lands surrounding the village*

The group had debated whether involving more of the local people was crucial to the project. One of the village leaders had said it was very difficult to get people in this village to volunteer for anything because of the difficulties they had to face just to feed their families. Others felt that even though it would be hard to enlist their physical labor, the local people should be involved in other ways. Chris agreed, and added that from his own experience, feeling you are in control of your own life is very important, and that getting involved in improving the community would make a difference to people in the long run. Finally, the group decided that finding ways to involve the maximum number of local people would help ensure the project's long-term success.

In making this decision they discovered something important about themselves as a group: they all shared a deep concern for their community and a respect for the ability of all community members to understand and support a future-oriented project.

- Deciding on goals together and reaching consensus on the philosophy behind them is a crucial first step in building the suppport necessary for a group to see a project through.

- When group members complain of a lack of communication during a project the source of the problem is often an unspoken disagreement about goals.

DETERMINING OBJECTIVES

While goals are general statements of what the group is trying to accomplish overall, objectives are the steps by which the goals are attained.

Objectives are the final results which, taken together, achieve the project goals.

Chris's group decided their objectives were:

> ***To plant 3000 tree seedlings by the beginning of the next rainy season.***
>
> ***To develop, over the next six months, a community awareness of the importance of trees to the community's future.***

Discussing objectives also helps the group decide on their priorities. Chris's group debated writing their first objective this way:

> *To involve school children in planting 3000 tree seedlings before the rainy season*

But they decided that their first priority was getting all the trees planted, and if school children weren't available they would find another way to accomplish it.

Because this first objective was stated in measurable terms, it would be easier to evaluate after the project was over. The group would only need to count the trees that had been planted to see if the objective had been reached.

The second objective, however, was a change in attitude, which would be harder to measure. Nevertheless it was a valid objective that had been the cause of much discussion.

The group had debated whether they should educate the school children who would, most likely, be planting the trees, in the hopes that they would take the environmental message home to their parents. They even had considered simply getting the trees planted without any explanation at all, thinking that the trees' importance would become obvious as they grew. But this, they decided, would defeat the goal of the project that they had already decided on: to involve the local people in the project right from the start.

DEFINING TASKS

After deciding on goals and objectives, the group needed to break the objectives down into tasks, which would give them even more concrete indicators of what they had to do in order to meet the objectives they had set for themselves.

For example, the second objective of the tree planting project:

> *To develop, over the next six months, a community awareness of the importance of trees to the community's future*

was still rather vague. How would the community be made aware? This required more discussion, clarification, and decisions about feasibility. Would the group announce the project at a community meeting? Would it produce posters to remind the villagers why new trees are important to solve the firewood problem? Would the group organize a fair on market day to announce their message through songs and plays? Would it try to accomplish all these tasks?

After some discussion of the feasibility of these ideas (see page 65) the group decided to include two of these three possibilities and wrote the tasks for the second objective this way:

> *To introduce the general plans for the tree planting project at the November community meeting*
>
> *To produce 10 posters informing people about the tree-planting project by December 1*

In order to be clear, tasks should:

- be stated in terms of what the group will do and when
- contain one activity or behavior
- be observable and measurable

When planning with your group, it's a good idea to write goals, objectives and tasks together before you start any other planning. This will foster group spirit, encourage open communication and prime people for action.

At the next few biweekly meetings of the group, Chris introduced several additional planning techniques (described later in this chapter). The group used the techniques to think through all the important tasks that needed to be accomplished if they were to meet their objectives. They chose to use the Easy PERT Chart (see page 85) to plan what tasks needed to be done, when and in what order, between October and March.

The group then used the tasks identified in their PERT chart to develop a work plan for each month (see page 91). Over the next six months they revised both the PERT chart and their monthly work plans to accommodate changes in resources, setbacks caused by bad weather, and unexpected offers of additional labor from other village groups.

Alternative Methods of Setting Goals, Objectives and Tasks

The following two activities have been found effective in the field with both literate and illiterate groups involved in planning complex projects. They are particularly helpful in making a different future seem realizable.

1. Before and After Pictures

The facilitator invites group members to draw a picture of whatever situation they find themselves in at present, and a picture of the situation as they would like to see it in the future. After the pictures are drawn, group members should list the steps that they think are necessary to get to the desired future state.

If the group is larger than three or four participants, the activity can be done in small groups. After each small group presents their drawing to the large group and explains it, the large group can decide which future scenario is most realistic and attractive to the group as a whole. Then together they can decide on the steps necessary to reach their goal.

This process requires much discussion, clarification and reality-testing by group members as they go along. It is a simple but powerful tool that can be used both in helping groups clarify their goals and by the Volunteer in meeting personal goals. Try it out on yourself when you're feeling confused or stymied by your work in the field.

2. Story With a Gap

This tool makes planning concrete and therefore simpler for village groups to grasp. It has been developed and used effectively by PROWWESS/UNDP, a participatory training group working to promote the role of women in water and environmental sanitation services in over 600 communities in developing countries worldwide.

The facilitator presents a "before" picture of the situation, for example, an unsanitary village, and invites the group to discuss what they see.

Alternatively, the facilitator can show the picture and tell a story about a particular family in the village who was adversely affected by the unsanitary conditions, giving names to the family members and elaborating on the health hazards in great detail. Finally, the facilitator builds the story to a climax where something clearly had to be done about the situation.

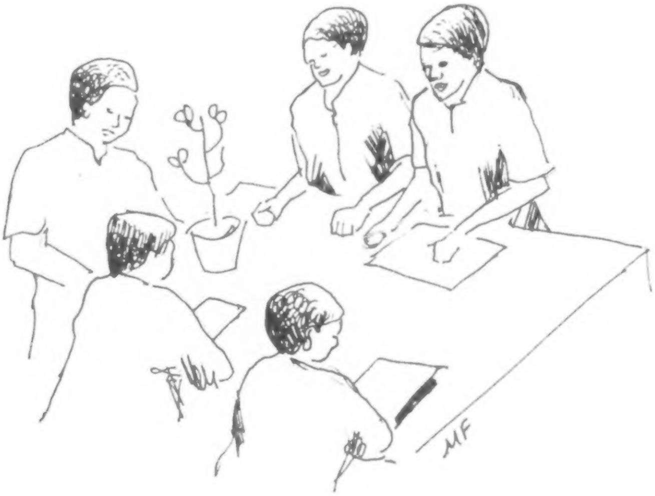
In the group discussion that follows either of these activities, participants should suggest why the situation has become so grave. For example, they may say that the pump is broken and there are no spare parts to fix it, that the children have misused it, and that vandals have broken it still further.

Now that the present situation has been described, the facilitator introduces the "after" picture and challenges the audience to fill the gap between the two pictures with actions that they could take to improve the situation.

While identifying the problems in the before and after pictures is an exercise in goal setting, filling the gap becomes an action planning activity. This is done with villagers again with the aid of visual images to make the situation concrete and related to their daily lives.

The facilitator presents pictures on cards to the village group, each picture representing one of the logical steps necessary to reach the goal of a more healthy situation. The group's task is to put the steps in a logical sequence. Blank cards can also be given to the group so that additional steps can be added if necessary. Sometimes a few less relevant pictures are included in the set and the group is given the option of discarding steps that they feel are unnecessary. However, villagers often find a humorous use for these cards and incorporate them into their plan of action.

After a few experiences planning with these visual props, even illiterate groups are able to plan without their aid. While using them, a great deal of discussion and sharing about beliefs, values and actual village practices results. This is valuable to both the villagers (to build group consensus) and to the facilitator (to gain an insider's view). For more information on this technique, see Lyra Srinivasan's Practical Ways of Involving People: A Manual for Training Trainers in Participatory Techniques.

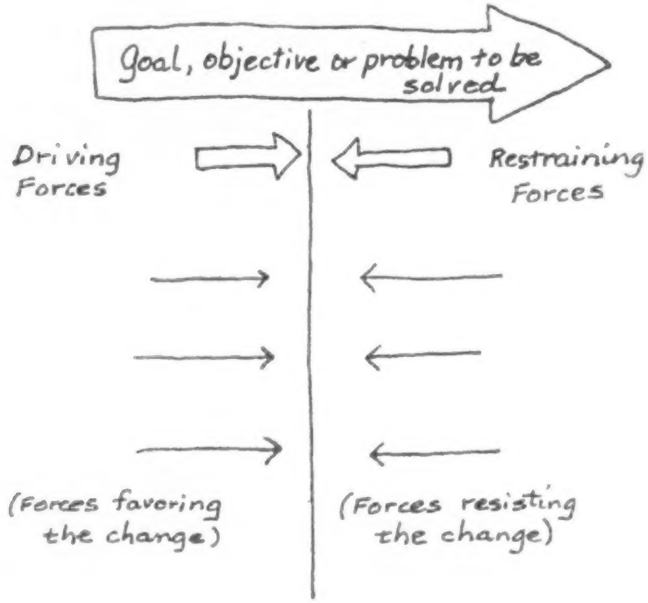


DETERMINING RESOURCES AND CONSTRAINTS

Force Field Analysis * (Saul Eisen, A Problem Solving Program, NTL, Washington, D.C.)

Force field analysis is a training device to assess the forces -- favorable and unfavorable -- that bear upon a problem. It is useful in helping groups moderate overly ambitious goals and find reasonable solutions to the problems that seem to stand in the way of their goals, objectives or tasks. It is an abstract tool, and so is used more effectively with groups that have already become adept at planning with concrete visual aids.

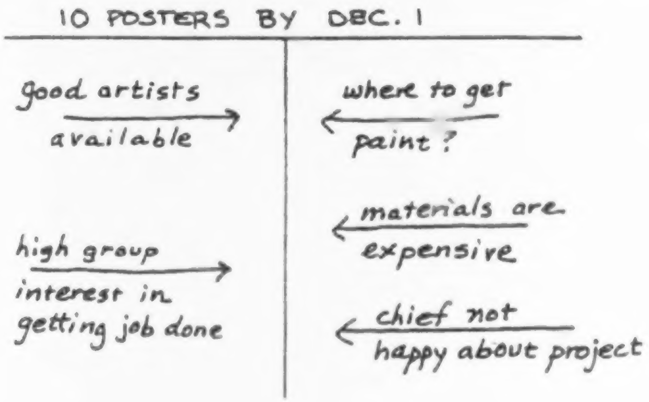
In the diagram, the center line represents a goal, objective or task that the group has determined or a problem they agree needs to be solved, while the arrows on either side represent the forces helping and hindering the attainment of the goal.


Goal, objective or problem to be solved
Driving Forces
Restraining Forces
(Forces favoring the change)
(Forces resisting the change)

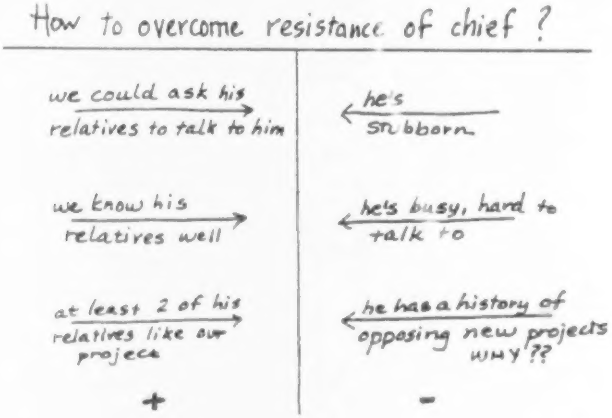
For example, Chris had a feeling that the second task of the agricultural extension group (to produce ten posters informing people about the tree planting project by December 1) would be difficult to achieve. December was only a month away. Chris had discovered that things just didn't happen that fast in his village.

But instead of putting a damper on the project by giving all the reasons it wouldn't work, Chris led the group in a force field analysis so that they could decide on the feasibility of the task themselves.

On the positive side, the group listed the high interest among group members and the availability of an artist in the village. On the negative side they listed the difficulty of obtaining the right kind of cardboard, the expense of paint and brushes for the artist and the resistance they might encounter from the local chief in putting up the posters at the village market. They hadn't thought about this last problem when they wrote this task for themselves, and now they saw it as something that might prevent them from accomplishing it.


10 POSTERS BY DEC. 1
good artists available
high group interest in getting job done
where to get paint?
materials are expensive
chief not happy about project

Chris then suggested to the group that they take that particular negative force, the resistance of the chief, and do a second force field analysis on that problem. On a new sheet of paper they drew another line labeled "how to overcome the resistance of the chief," and began brainstorming the forces that would help or hinder such an effort.


How to overcome resistance of chief?
we could ask his relatives to talk to him
we know his relatives well
at least 2 of his relatives like our project
+
he's stubborn
he's busy, hard to talk to
he has a history of opposing new projects WHY??
-

Here, the group became quite creative. On the positive side they found that they knew people related to the chief who could perhaps influence him. His cooperation might be gained by suggesting that he donate some land for the project, thereby boosting his esteem in the community.

When the group looked into the negative side they had to ask themselves why exactly the chief was standing in the way of this project, and realized it was a lack of understanding on his part of the relationship of new trees to future economic growth for the community. Soon the group was thinking of ways to reach him, and with that, they were on their way to a solution to the problem and a project that would be even more successful than they had hoped.

Cart and Rocks Exercise * (Charles Harnes, Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts)

In an attempt to make the Force Field Analysis (above) understandable to groups of villagers with less experience with abstractions, the Cart and Rocks Exercise was devised to show the helping and hindering forces visually.

You can use any cheap local materials to represent a cart, the rocks to put in the cart, and the animals to pull it. Start a discussion among the group about the situation they would like to improve or the problem they would like to solve. Choose an object to represent the goal that they have determined, and place a box or other object that represents the cart facing the goal but some distance away from it.

Ask the group to name resources available to reach their goal. For each resource they name, place an object symbolizing an animal pulling the cart in front of the box. For each constraint they name, place a rock in the box. This will represent a force holding people back from reaching their goal.

After all the animals and rocks have been put in place, ask the group to discuss the likelihood of reaching their desired goal. They should then analyze the positive and negative forces in relation to each other, one by one, to realistically adjust their goal or find new courses of action to reach it.

2. PLANNING: FIGURING OUT HOW TO GET THERE

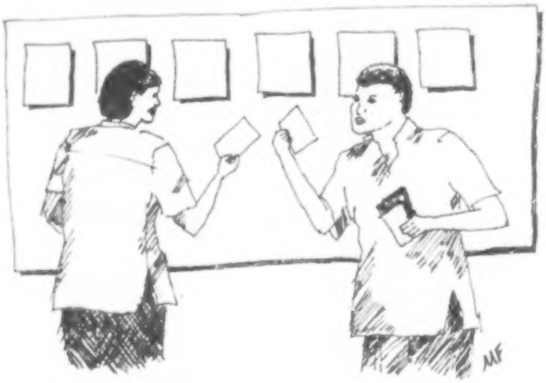
EASY PERT CHART

A PERT (Program Evaluation and Review Technique) chart is a tool developed by systems analysts to plan projects consisting of independent tasks which must be completed in a certain order and in a certain time frame. It tells when the project will be started and completed, by whom and for whom, in what sequence and with what effects.

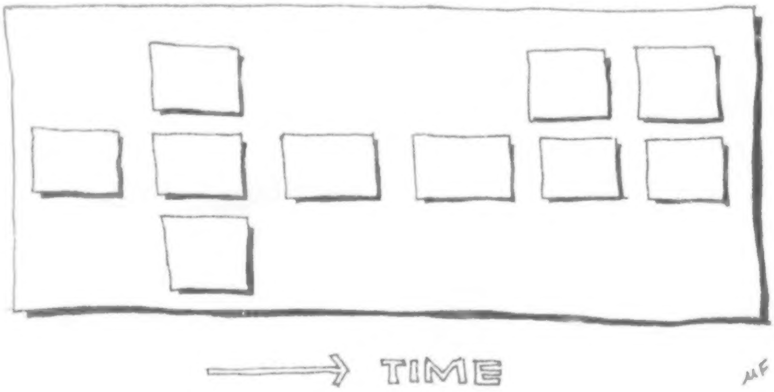
A simplified version of the PERT chart is presented here, adapted to NFE planning by its flexible format that groups can work on together and adjust as the situation changes.

You will see the similarity between the EASY PERT chart and the STORY WITH A GAP exercise (page 81), a more concrete planning tool for village groups.

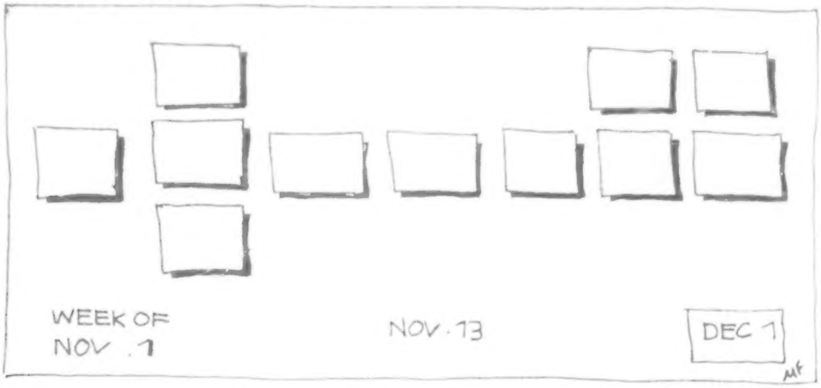
Start by brainstorming with your group a list of all the activities that need to be done to reach their goals. Write the activities on separate slips of paper or file cards so the group can arrange them in a logical sequence. Post these cards on the wall with masking tape so everyone can see them, add to them, and move them around at will.



As the group decides on the sequence of the cards they will find that some of the activities can be done simultaneously. These cards should be placed on the same vertical axis.

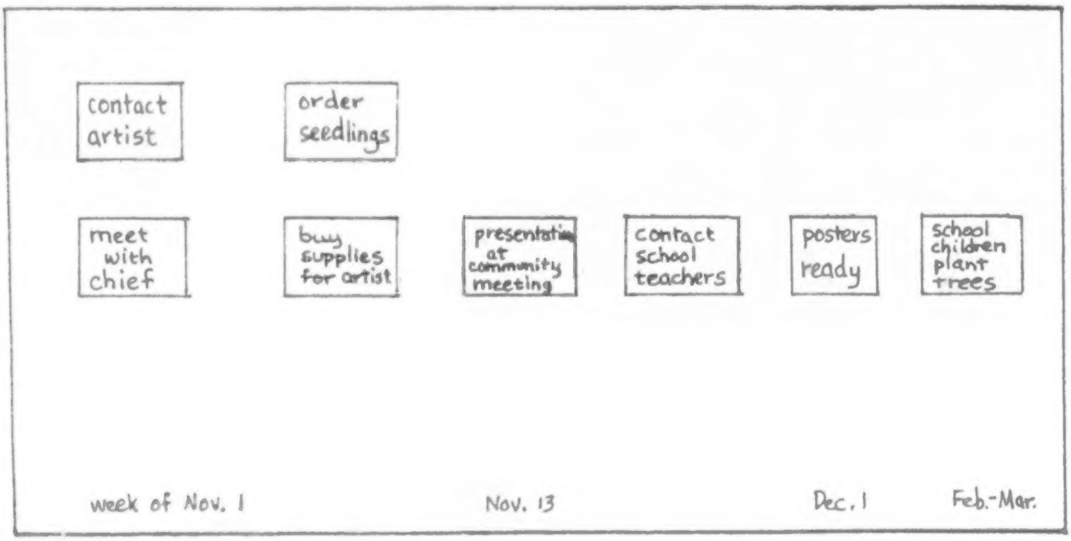


If the group has a deadline for the final activity, this date should be posted at the end of the line.



The group then can work backwards, establishing dates for the completion of the other activities.

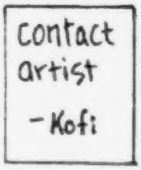
For example, Chris's group of agricultural extension agents might plan to accomplish their tasks this way:

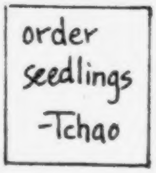

contact artist
order seedlings
meet with chief
buy supplies for artist
presentation at community meeting
contact school teachers
posters ready
school children plant trees
week of Nov. 1
Nov. 13
Dec. 1
Feb.-Mar.

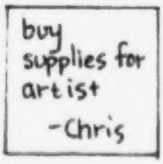
Since some of the tasks in any project are more crucial to its success than others, these should be singled out by the group and marked in a special way, in color, or with appropriate symbols of urgency!! In the tree-planting project, ordering the trees on time is crucial to the success of the project, so it needs to be given special attention. Alternative ways of getting the seedlings to the village on time should also be discussed in case the original plan fails through.

The more thoroughly these details are talked through with the whole group, the more information will be shared, and the more each group member will feel responsible for the success of the project.

Next, the group should decide who will be responsible for the various activities. As decisions are made, names can be written on the cards along with the activities.


contact
artist
-Kofi


order
seedlings
-Tchao

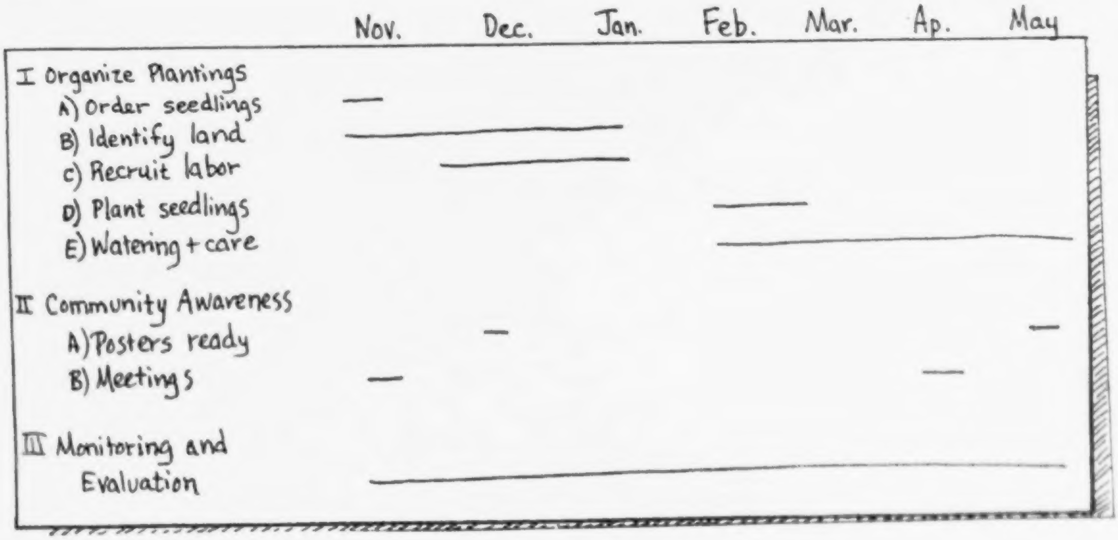

buy
supplies for
artist
-Chris

For more complex activities, the group can decide:

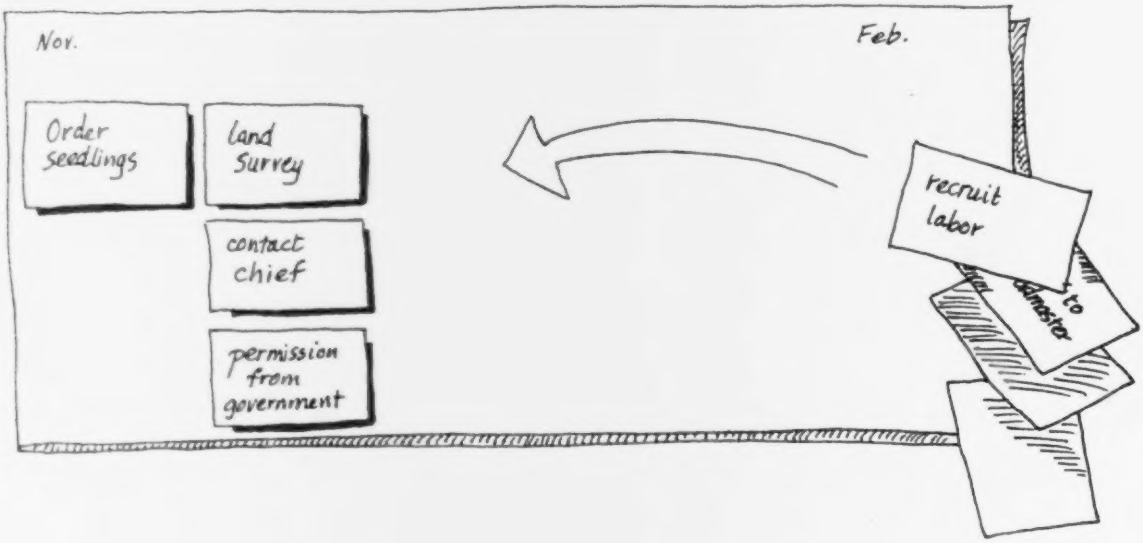
- who will be responsible
- who will be the support person or persons
- who needs to be informed

GANTT CHART

Another useful tool for longer and more complex projects is the GANTT chart or time line which maps the objectives on a calendar. This process helps the group visualize the project as a whole.



Then, each of the tasks on the Gantt chart (such as preparing the land for planting) can be broken down into its component parts (identify possible appropriate land, engage support of land owners/users, create strategies to protect land and new seedlings from goats, etc.). These parts can be written on cards as in the previous activity and arranged in their logical sequence.



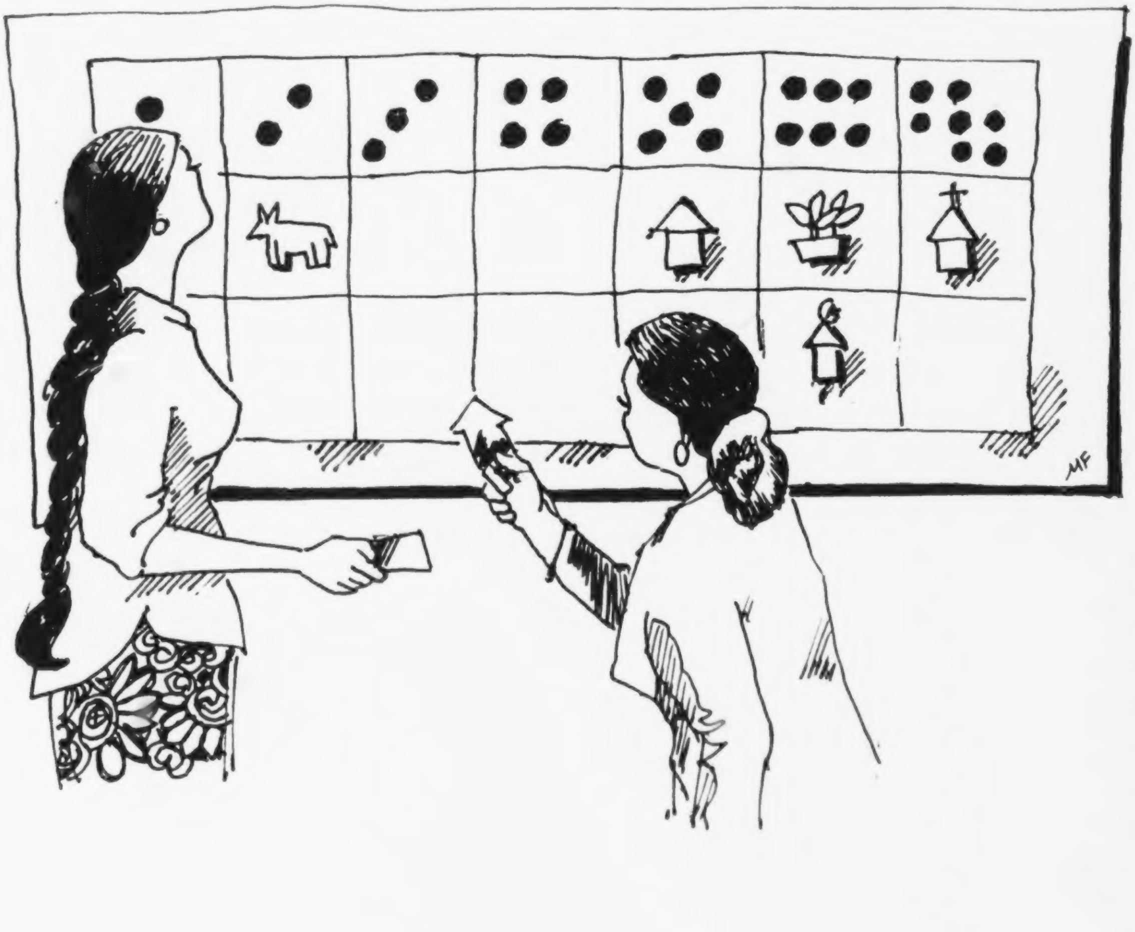
WEEKLY OR MONTHLY SCHEDULES

Sometimes you need to plan activities in more detail to be clear as to precisely what will be done and when. The schedule can be planned the same way that the group worked on the EASY PERT chart (page 85). The final version of the schedule can be posted on a wall where everyone can see it, and copies can be distributed to all participants.

When planning a weekly schedule there is always a tendency to plan more than there is time for, so leave a few hours a week free for review or unexpected needs.

When using EASY PERT charts, Gantt charts and schedules while working with groups with mixed literacy skills, you can use symbols for time periods (months, market day, prayer day), the people involved, the activities and the special events.

Dots can be used to count off the days of the week, weeks or months (see illustration). Your group can come up with suggestions of symbols that are meaningful to them. Then, they can make a flannel board (page 130) and cut-outs of these symbols in order to participate in flexible collective planning.



WORK PLANS

A work plan is a schedule drawn up at any point in the long-term planning process to keep everybody up to date on where you are. The following is an example of a work plan for organizing a tree-planting project.

NFE WORK PLAN
Tree-Planting Project Oct.-Nov.

Objective / Task	Current Status	Planned Activities	Who Responsible?	Achievement Indicators	Time Indicators	Resources Needed
1. Develop posters A) Designs by children	Meeting scheduled with Headmaster	Hold contest for schoolchildren - Designs	Kofi	Designs completed	Contest: Nov 1-10	Paper + paint for children
B) Artist makes posters	Two possible artists identified	Choose artist Get supplies	Tchao and Etienne Etienne	Posters up in community	Artist finishes by Nov. 20 Posters distributed by Nov. 25	Artist supplies
2. Plant trees A) Prepare land	Initial survey completed	Meeting with chief to discuss tree-planting	Robert will request meeting	Meeting scheduled	Meet in early Nov.	—
B) Obtain seedlings	Sources of seedlings identified	Contact Ministry for seedlings	Tchao and Chris	Ministry agrees to supply seedlings	Agreement by mid-November	Transport to Capitol

SESSION PLANS

Session plans are useful in planning for meetings, workshops and structured classes. They provide detailed, step by step guidelines for facilitators and discussion leaders. Shared with participants, they are a roadmap for the group to achieve its goals for the session. Typically, session plans include:

* The purpose of the session (can be stated as goals and objectives)

* The sequence of activities for the session, including introductions and icebreakers, informational and task-related activities, and means of assessing the effectiveness of the session

* Estimated time for each activity

* Materials needed for each activity

* Guidelines for the facilitator or discussion leader

The agricultural extension agents working with Chris developed a basic session plan for their visits to other communities to meet the people on the topic of deforestation. They created a "generic" plan for the two-hour time period normally allocated for such a meeting and modified it as needed. While each meeting was unique, the session plan helped the extension agents to ensure that goals were shared and important information was discussed in each meeting. The plan also gave them more confidence in presenting their ideas to the village groups.

The example on the following page will give you an idea of the kind of plan they developed.

PLAN FOR VILLAGE MEETING

Purpose of meeting: To introduce the reforestation campaign to community members present at the meeting.

Materials to bring: Before and After pictures, roll-up blackboard, chalk, cloth to wipe board, sample tree seedling.

Activities:

1. Introductions (who we are, our backgrounds, why we are here) Time: 15 minutes. Facilitator: All

2. Before and After Pictures (Bleak scene and forest scene.) Group discussion of "before" picture: what problems it causes people here, etc. Group discussion of "after" picture: what life would be like if trees were growing here again, etc. Time: 45 minutes. Facilitators: Kofi and Chris

3. Brainstorming: Briefly, what has to happen to get from the "before" sitution to the "after" situation? Time: 15 minutes. Facilitator: Kofi

4. Information sharing: Trees available from the Ministry, other villages have involved school children in planting, etc. What resources or ideas can this village contribute? Time: 30 minutes. Facilitator: Tchao

5. Action Step: What concrete plans can we make to take some action by a specific date? (Plans will vary according to the group. Example: Set up committee that will meet with us in two weeks to discuss the use of communal land.) Time: 10 minutes. Facilitators: Kofi and Chris

6. Closure: Formal thanks to Chief.

Guidelines: Make sure to give participants a chance to react to pictures -- don't jump in right away.

KEEP TO TIME LIMITS

Evaluation Method: Informal impressions of the level of enthusiasm, offers of resources, action steps proposed by group.

GAINING SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

Ideally, the community will be involved in needs assessments as well as in the planning and carrying out of projects that concern them. But in practice, a core group is most likely to get actively involved, while the rest of the community is either uninformed or not particularly interested.

You can start to build support among a wider section of the community by working with your group to determine:

Who is in agreement with our goals?
Who is apathetic?
Who is uninformed?
Who is in disagreement?

Your group can list groups of people or critical individuals for each category to help figure out how to increase support for the project. The people and groups who are in agreement with your goals can be enlisted to inform and energize those who are passive.

Your group can explore the different types of communication channels that exist in the community. Use more than one for the greatest effectiveness. Here are some possibilities:

"Word-of Mouth" Channels

* person-to-person
* within community sub-groups
* through key opinion leaders

Established Governmental Channels

* extension workers
* local and national representatives

Established Community Channels

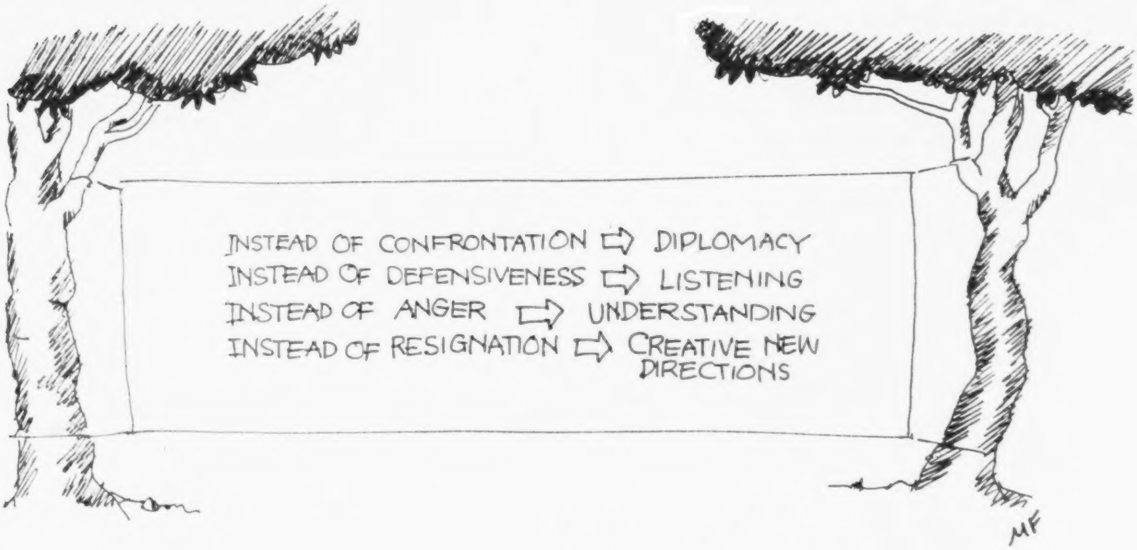
* community meetings
* official leaders (political, religious, traditional)
* "town criers"

Mass Media Channels

* radio and television
* national and local newspapers

INSTEAD OF CONFRONTATION...

If certain important individuals seem to be blocking the project, listen to them and try to understand their point of view, even if you are in complete disagreement with it. Inform them of the ways they and the entire community will benefit from the project. Convince them by your group's action that the project can be done responsibly. Find key figures who are sympathetic to your project who also have influence with those who are unconvinced.


INSTEAD OF CONFRONTATION ⇨ DIPLOMACY
INSTEAD OF DEFENSIVENESS ⇨ LISTENING
INSTEAD OF ANGER ⇨ UNDERSTANDING
INSTEAD OF RESIGNATION ⇨ CREATIVE NEW DIRECTIONS
MF

3. PLANNING: KEEPING TRACK OF HOW YOU'RE DOING

REPORTS

Reports are often considered a nuisance, both to write and to receive, because they seem to add to the paperwork without any observable result. However, reports that are written creatively, that give relevant information and interesting detail in a conversational tone are more fun to write and are much more likely to be read.

However, if you are writing reports for a Ministry or other formal audience, be sure to find out the format they expect and use reserved language and the correct salutations. It is possible to be formal without being dull.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

If you are asked to take the minutes, note who was present, who introduced important ideas, what these ideas were, the results of any voting or other decision-making process, and the topics that were tabled or put off for further discussion.

Here is one possible form for minutes:

Extension Agents Association

From: (name of person taking minutes)

Subject: Minutes of (date)

Present:

Absent:

Visiting:

Next Meeting:

1. The minutes from the meeting of (date) were read and discussed.

2. Getting Seedlings for the Tree-Planting Project

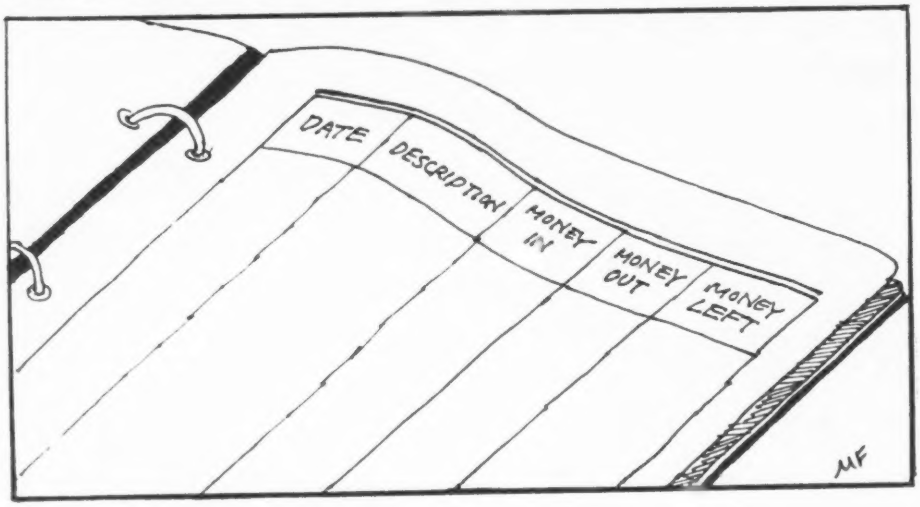
Two possible sources of seedlings were discussed, the Ministry of Agriculture and the International Reforestation program. Kofi agreed to contact both sources and bring information on them to the next meeting.

3. (other topics discussed)

KEEPING SIMPLE FINANCIAL RECORDS

Although your group will probably never have to keep track of the large amounts of money that finance a large development project, sometimes you may work with donations from individuals, church groups or private businesses. Group members may contribute small sums themselves to finance a cooperative venture. Participants starting a small business may be successful for the first time in obtaining a loan from a bank. Whenever money is involved, records must be kept scrupulously.

The easiest records, and those that work well for most small projects are like the transaction register in a checkbook:

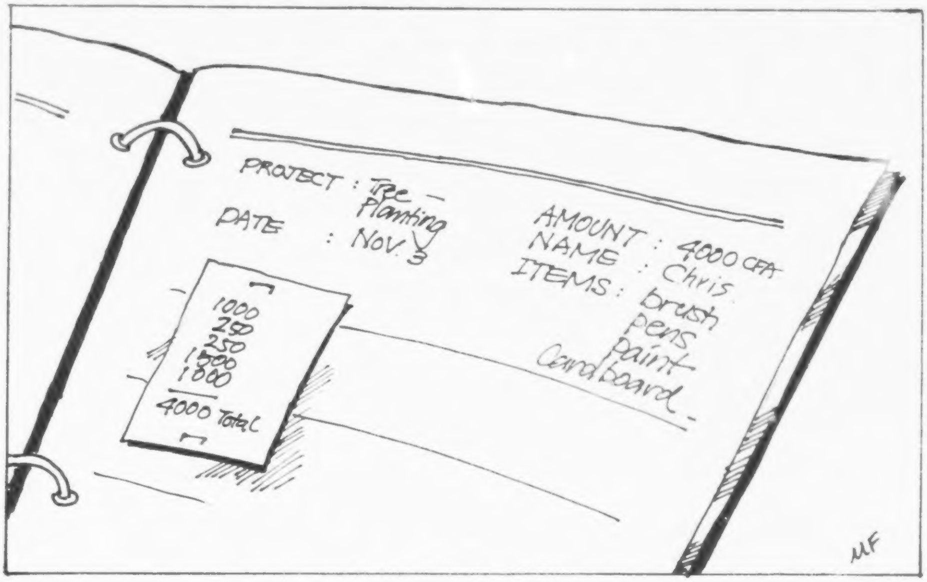


Even semi-literate groups have used this kind of financial record successfully.

If your budget requires that you spend only certain amounts for certain things it will be necessary to categorize your expenses according to type, such as transportation, supplies, equipment rental, salaries, etc.

Supplies		Transportation		Equipment
paper	5000	taxi 11/3	250	shovels
ink	1000	taxi 11/4	750	etc.
paint	4000	taxi 11/4	1250	
ruler	750	truck rental	15 000	
brushes	4500	gas	10 000	
		mileage @ 50/km	25 000	

To make your records complete, keep your sales slips and receipts by stapling them to a sheet of paper and filling in whatever information your group considers necessary:


PROJECT : Tree-Planting
DATE : Nov. 3
AMOUNT : 4000 CFA
NAME : Chris
ITEMS : brush
pens
paint
Cardboard
1000
250
250
1500
1000
4000 Total
MF

These sheets can be bound in a loose-leaf notebook so that everyone can see exactly what was spent and by whom. Openness about finances is a good way to build trust and support among group members.

FEEDBACK

The last and probably the most important indication of how your group is doing is frequent feedback from the people the project is affecting as well as from the group itself. Knowing what both you and others think of your activities as they are going on is important in providing real service and meeting people's real needs.

Chris's group of extension agents decided to gauge their progress even before the trees were planted by brainstorming the following two lists:

What has gone well so far?	**What could we improve?**

They also decided to spend some time listening to what the people were saying about the whole tree-planting idea. They wanted to make sure that they were not upsetting anyone unduly, and that people with creative suggestions could become more involved in the project while it was still going on.

In talking to people and asking them what they thought of the project, the group discovered that while many people in the community were still skeptical, they were not actively opposed to the tree planting idea. This information made them realize they needed to talk about the project at regular community events and to find more ways to spread enthusiasm before the actual tree planting got underway.

In Chapter 6 (Evaluation) you will find other ideas for soliciting and interpreting feedback, both while your activities are going on and at the end of a project. Try to interweave these techniques throughout your NFE activities so that you will keep in touch with what people are thinking and feeling. Once your group knows how the project is affecting the community you should be able to adapt, reorganize, add and subtract things from the project as necessary to better meet people's needs.

WHEN PLANNING DOESN'T GO AS PLANNED...

The only trouble with all this very organized, efficient planning is that things often do not work out the way they look on paper. Even with the most flexible of schedules, you may find yourself frustrated by delays and confusions of almost unbelievable proportions.

When this happens, it is important to remember why you have volunteered to help. In developing countries without sufficient resources and infrastructure, communications may be interrupted at crucial moments, money may suddenly become unavailable, and people may fall ill or have to tend to family and community responsibilities for which there are no social services.

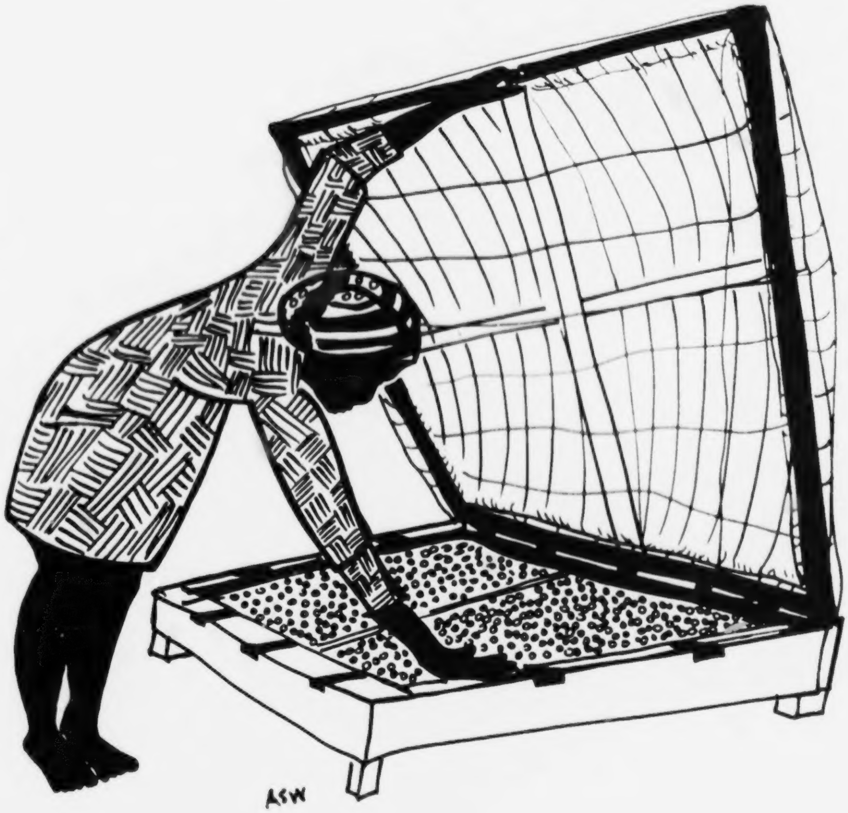
In addition, the difficulties of cross-cultural communication may interrupt your group's carefully constructed schedule. People whose support you thought you could count on may suddenly become cool toward the project. Tension may develop between the Volunteer and the group members over an incident that one or the other of the parties may not even know existed.

These glitches and setbacks are to be expected, even welcomed, as part of the Peace Corps experience. In fact, they may be opportunities for personal growth.

CHAPTER 6

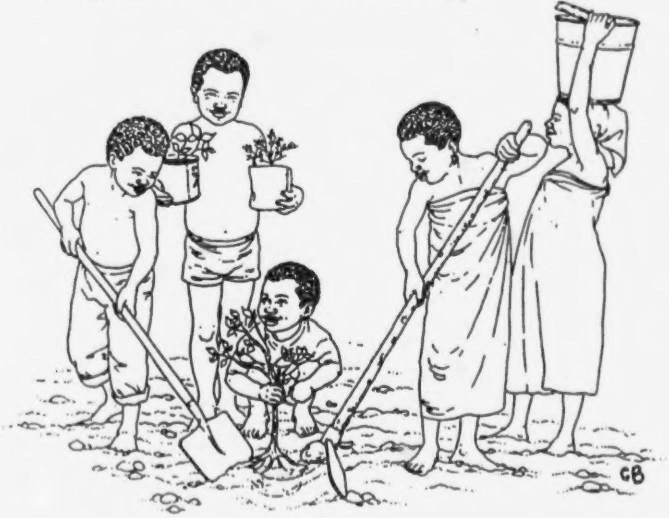
EVALUATION

- * *Why is evaluation an important part of your work in NFE?*
- * *What are the issues to consider in planning and conducting an evaluation?*
- * *What evaluation methods are appropriate for NFE?*
- * *Why and how should groups share evaluation results with others?*



Chris pulled up at Peace Corps headquarters and swung off his moto, dusty, sweaty, and wearing a smile that seemed to originate somewhere deep inside. He was nearing the end of his service, almost ready to move on, and he felt totally at ease with himself and the world.

His cookstove idea had never gotten very far, but it didn't seem to matter. Although it had worked in other regions, it was probably an idea whose time had not yet come, Chris thought. The tree planting, though, had gone well. His group had gotten those three thousand trees planted, not by their target date, it was true, but the important thing was, they were in the ground and flourishing.



The schoolchildren had gotten into it, he recalled with a smile; it was great to see them each take charge of a tree, and tend and protect it. The posters informing the community about the project had been a big problem for awhile, but after they had finally been perfected, people from the neighboring villages saw them and invited Chris and the other extension agents to their community meetings to talk about deforestation. As a result, more vacant land had been set aside, and the teachers in the local primary schools had decided that tree planting would be their contribution to community service.

Chris climbed the stairs to his APCD's office, thinking about what it was that had made the project work. During the year and a half they had been involved in the project, his group of agricultural extension agents had learned a lot about working with teachers and schoolchildren. But what exactly they had learned, Chris was not sure. Whatever it was, it was worth passing on to others. Chris's APCD agreed. He suggested that Chris do an evaluation of the project to really assess its impact.

What is evaluation, really? Chris wondered. Back home it was synonymous with tests, both formal and informal. He had been evaluated by professors, by College Board exams, by doctors, by driver's license examiners, by Peace Corps recruiters, even by his parents. But NFE evaluation must be different, he decided. If development ideas came from the people, they should also be evaluated by the people. After all, they were the ones whose lives would be changed if the project worked. They were the ones whose hopes had been raised by the prospect of development.

It seemed unusual, Chris thought, to have the people evaluate a development project. That would mean that the villagers would give their critical opinions of the project and its coordinators, rather than development officials assessing the interest of the villagers in taking responsibility. It would mean literacy learners assessing their teachers, mothers with young children evaluating the clinics that served them. It would be pretty revolutionary, Chris thought, if NFE evaluation was carried this far.

What would this kind of evaluation mean for his program? Who were "the people" in his case? Were they the agricultural extension agents who had done so much of the initial work? Were they the teachers and schoolchildren who had gotten interested later and planted trees with such enthusiasm? Or were they the villagers, who had learned about the project at community meetings and finally gave their support to the idea?

Once the group figured out who should do the evaluating, then they would have to decide what to evaluate, and how to carry it out. They would have to know who that evaluation would be for, in the long run, and how to present the results.

* WHO EVALUATES?
* WHAT TO EVALUATE?
* HOW TO EVALUATE?
* EVALUATION FOR WHOM?
* HOW TO COMMUNICATE
THE FINDINGS?

Chris's APCD gave him a definition of evaluation accepted by private voluntary organizations (PVOs), who often try to adopt an NFE approach.

> *"Evaluation is an integral part of the management of development projects designed to:*
>
> 1. *identify, during the life of a project, its strengths, weaknesses and relevance to local conditions.*
> 2. *assess the impact of a project on the lives of local community members*
> 3. *analyze the results and apply the lessons learned to project and program planning, PVO policies and development strategies."*
>
> from Evaluation Sourcebook for Private and Voluntary Organizations ACVAFS, 1983

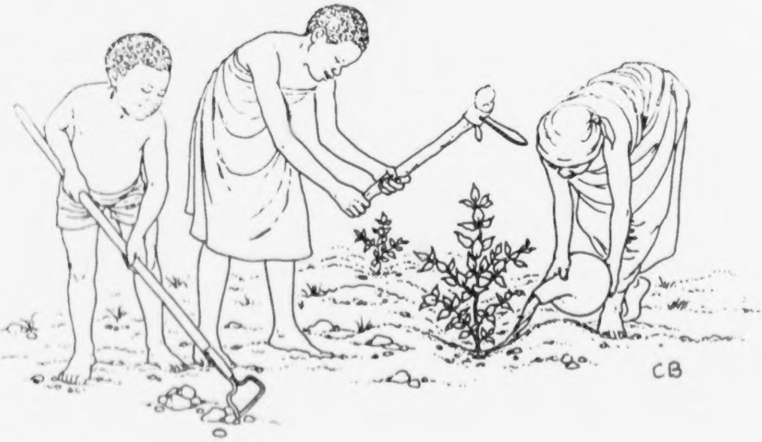
The APCD suggested that Chris get together with his group of extension agents and decide how this definition applied to their project, and then discuss each of the questions above to structure their evaluation.

During their meetings to decide on an evaluation strategy, the group realized that they had started their evaluation already when they had solicited feedback from the community about how they were doing. And when they had asked themselves, even before the tree seedlings had arrived, "what have we done well, and what could we do differently?" (p. 98), this, too, was evaluation.

In fact, soliciting this information during the life of the project, as the definition suggests, is probably the most useful kind of evaluation a group can do. This **formative evaluation** allows for flexibility and change while the project is still going on. Its purpose is to take suggestions from the people to better meet their needs and to encourage them to be as involved as much as possible in the entire project.

A **summative evaluation**, on the other hand, is an evaluation done at the end of a project or as the project is ending. As its name suggests, it sums up the results of the project to help the group decide what changes to make if they plan to repeat the project or to undertake a similar project in the future. Summative evaluations are often used by funders to make decisions about future involvement and by sponsoring agencies to measure the degree to which a project has achieved its goals.

Chris's group decided it was important to continue the formative evaluation process they had unwittingly started. For if they waited to evaluate until enthusiasm had died down and all the trees were planted, they would not learn anything about how to improve the way they were going about it.



In looking at the definition of evaluation to see how it applied to their project, the group decided it would be difficult to assess the impact of the program on the lives of local community members, because it would be such a long time before they would see the changes resulting from reforestation.

But maybe there were different kinds of changes that could be seen already, someone suggested. Schoolchildren had new knowledge and a protective attitude toward the young trees. Teachers were proud to be doing community service. Things like these were hard to measure, but nevertheless they would be valid indicators of how the project was working.

Finally, the group decided, the last paragraph of the definition was a little grandiose when applied to their small project. But if they did the evaluation before the project was over, they could certainly apply the lessons learned to what they did in the future. This was particularly important to Chris because he was leaving, and his hope was that the project would continue and that interest would remain high enough to see those trees to maturity.

Over the next few weeks, Chris and his group discussed how to evaluate the project. They agreed to try to practice participatory evaluation by having the community decide how and why the project should be evaluated. Participatory evaluation includes the community not just as suppliers of information and opinions on questions asked by others, but actively involves them in developing the issues and questions to be addressed and the methods to be used in the evaluation.

The group used some of the resource materials suggested in the Reference section of this manual to get more ideas about evaluation design and methods. The following are some of the things they considered.

WHO EVALUATES?

* Community members - If the local people, including the schoolteachers and children, are asked their opinions about the way the project was carried out and what should be done in the future, they will be more likely to maintain a high level of enthusiasm. In addition, the process of doing an evaluation will contribute to their ability to manage their own process of development. This is particularly important for children, who will be learning from an early age that it is possible to be, as Freire says, "active transformers of their world."

* Project staff - Staff can evaluate the program by developing the questions they want answered and then choosing the methods they feel will be the most useful. Though it is sometimes embarrassing to ask why certain things are not working, staff members who critique themselves will feel less defensive, and in the end, take more responsibility for making the changes that they themselves feel are necessary. (See Feedback, page 39)

* National headquarters or funding agencies - If a project is funded by an outside agency they may be interested in doing a more traditional "outsider" evaluation, where the project, the staff and the community may be the objects of scrutiny. This is sometimes required by public and private donor organizations. If possible, any outside evaluation should be planned with project representatives to ensure that it will be conducted at a time and in a manner that is supportive, rather than potentially disruptive.

* Evaluation facilitator - Sometimes an outsider can be useful in helping the insiders carry out their own self-evaluation. This person acts as a facilitator, a challenger, a colleague, a mediator, and an advisor in helping groups do the kind of evaluation they would like to do. An experienced Volunteer working in another project or a Peace Corps staff person might occasionally act in this role.

WHAT TO EVALUATE?

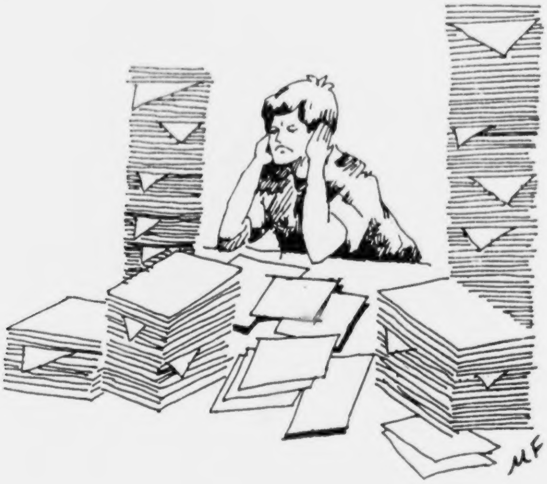
* Evaluate progress toward objectives. Were they fulfilled? How well were they done? Were they done within the time allowed? How could they have been done better?

* Search out and evaluate unexpected results. What else happened that nobody had planned on? Why did it happen? Was it bad or good? How can these things be avoided or enhanced in the future? Look at knowledge, skills, attitudes, and aspirations that may have been changed as a result of the project.

* Evaluate the cost effectiveness of the project. How could money have been saved? Where are more funds needed? How important is cost effectiveness in comparison with the personal or social gains people have made by working on the project together?

* Evaluate people's effectiveness in communicating their message, in accomplishing the tasks they took on, in creating goodwill to make the project run smoothly. This is all best done by self-evaluation.

* DON'T EVALUATE just for the sake of evaluation. This will result in a mountain of data that no one wants to tabulate, much less analyze or implement for the good of the project.



WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK YOURSELVES, "WHAT DO WE WANT TO KNOW?"

HOW TO EVALUATE?

The methods you use to evaluate depend on:

- what you want to know
- whom you plan to ask for opinions, observations, data
- who will participate in carrying out the evaluation
- who wants to see the results

Choose among the following techniques and think of some ideas of your own to involve your group and community in carrying out an NFE evaluation. (See also p. 130 for other evaluation techniques.)

1. Questionnaire or interview of community members (page 60). World Neighbors, a development agency that uses participatory evaluation as part of its training and development process, suggests the following guidelines for getting information from the community at large:

- Make sure all community members understand why the survey is being taken

- Invite their participation in deciding what should be asked

- Avoid unnecessary questions, and questions which are too direct and personal

- Ask at least some open-ended questions which bring out unforseen facts and opinions

- Involve community volunteers in actually taking the survey

2. Analysis of documents and reports Documents might include financial records, weekly or monthly reports to the home office, any documentation about the history of the project, even letters from former Volunteers in the project.

3. Photos and slides These records of who was involved and what the project was like in the past can help gauge progress made. For example, if Chris thinks to take pictures of the tree seedlings this year, later Volunteers in his region will have a concrete idea of the how far the project has come.

In addition, pictures of the children planting trees will remind the community of the spirit that was generated and the educational value of the project at a later time, when enthusiasm may not be as high.

4. Mapping If community members make graphic representations of appropriate aspects of the project, they are likely to gain new perspective as well as adding to the community record. In the tree-planting project these maps might show the land set aside for trees in relation to neighboring land in the village, as well as the numbers of trees planted.

5. Observation (See page 57). Use any combination of the four techniques in Chapter 3 to gain valuable information, especially about the unexpected results of a project.

6. Participant Observation An observer can often learn more about a project by actively participating in it, all the while making mental notes of what is happening for evaluation purposes. For example, if Chris plants trees with the teachers and schoolchildren he can notice things like level of participation (how many showed up?) and enthusiasm (kids' comments? general attitude?). He will also be in an excellent position to understand the problems with the program as it is set up (not enough shovels provided? inadequate demonstration of how to plant a tree, resulting in loss of seedlings?).

7. Small group and community meetings Meetings are a forum for airing opinions, gathering information about problems and soliciting suggestions for the improvement of the project.

8. Self-evaluation checklists People involved in running the project may keep a record of their personal goals and their progress in meeting these goals. This might be done in the form of a diary or journal, or in conversation with other staff members or Volunteers in other projects.

9. Visits by others Visitors doing the same kind of work in other communities can be helpful in letting the group see their work through the eyes of others. After showing them around the project you can brainstorm ideas for improvement and celebrate your progress.

10. Quantitative Measurements Just about anything that can be counted can be used to give outsiders an idea of the gains of the project. For example, Chris's group could count the number of trees that were planted and then count them again after six months to see how many survived. They might also count the number of schoolchildren who planted trees, the percentage of schools in the community that were active in the project and the number of people that turned up at community meetings to hear about the problem of deforestation.

However, beware of judging a project -- or allowing others to judge it -- solely on the basis of numbers. For example, if Chris and a few other Volunteers had planted 2000 trees, the project would have ultimately less value than if the village people organized the planting of 500 trees themselves. The statistics alone, though, show otherwise.

In the same way, a total failure by quantitative measures (the death of all the seedlings, for example) might not have been a total loss for the community if consciousness was raised and people were ready to consider how to carry out the project more effectively next time.

USE A COMBINATION OF EVALUATION METHODS TO GIVE THE MOST ACCURATE PICTURE OF THE PROJECT

EVALUATION FOR WHOM?

When designing an evaluation it is extremely important to consider who wants the information. For example, if UNICEF supplied the tree seedlings for Chris's project, they may require evaluations at certain intervals in a specific format.

But if Chris wants to leave the evaluation as a record for other Volunteers who may be assigned to the area in the future, a completely different kind of evaluation would probably be called for, perhaps something with more description, history, pictorial records, diary entries, and quotes from villagers, schoolchildren and key leaders.

Try to sort out, as you design your evaluation:

WHO WANTS TO KNOW WHAT FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

Writing a "WWP statement" will help you understand what kind of information is called for and what methods should be used. You may well find that the "who" is two or more different groups with conflicting expectations about the information to be gathered.

For example, the agency that supplied the seedlings may want to know how many survived after 6 months for the purpose of deciding on the type of seedling that does best in the local environment.

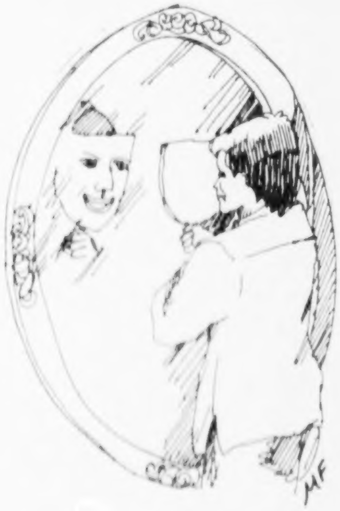
At the same time, Peace Corps may be interested in the evaluation in order to decide whether or not to put more Volunteers into the project. They may be much less interested in tree survival rate and more concerned with the level of community interest, or the Volunteer's state of mind after two years in the field.

The group of village leaders and extension agents may be interested in the evaluation in order to understand particular, subtle problems more fully. Why, for example, did it take four months to get suitable posters made? How did the chief, who had seemed so stubbornly against the project at the beginning, become its most ardent supporter?

Finally, the group may decide that other community members really deserve a report of the project, and in asking them what they want to know, they may discover that the parents' primary concern is how much time their children are taking away from their regular lessons in order to take care of the trees.

Because all these different needs are difficult, if not impossible to fulfill in a single evaluation, you should consider doing several evaluations for the different interest groups. At the same time, you should consider supplying a bit more information than some groups ask for.

For example, in reporting to the community meeting that schoolchildren take an hour a week of class time to tend the trees, you might also point out the number of trees planted, and the increased interest on the part of teachers and children in science lessons, or whatever else unexpected that turns up in the evaluation process.



Although it is tempting to present only a very rosy picture to the groups and agencies whose continuing support you need, when the group does an evaluation for its own information it should try to avoid self-deception. Evaluating the good things and rejoicing in them is necessary and a boost to morale, but avoiding looking at areas for improvement will inhibit the personal growth so necessary to the development process.

HOW TO COMMUNICATE THE FINDINGS?

World Neighbors has the following suggestions for communicating evaluation findings:

1. MAKE SURE THE EVALUATION REACHES THE RIGHT PEOPLE. The form of communication you choose should be tailored to different people's needs. A development agency needs a formal report, while the community might be more interested in an oral presentation, or an exhibit with posters and photos.

2. **KEEP IT SIMPLE.** Decide which facts and statistics are essential (not always an easy task!) and present them in clear, direct language.

3. **MAKE IT CONVINCING.** People should be sure that your findings substantiate facts, not just the opinions of a few.

4. **MAKE IT UNDERSTANDABLE.** Communicate in the language of the intended audience and use a minimum of technical jargon. When you must use technical terms, define them in a glossary or as part of your oral explanation.

5. **USE GRAPHS, TABLES, CHARTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS** whenever possible. They can communicate a lot of information at a glance.

6. **KEEP IT SHORT.** Too many evaluations are gathering dust because their length intimidates their intended readers. And since they remain unread, they cannot influence programming decisions as they are meant to.

7. **INVOLVE "THE PEOPLE" IN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT HOW TO COMMUNICATE THE FINDINGS.** Since NFE activities should ideally come from the people, be carried out by the people and be evaluated by the people, it is fitting that the people should also help decide how to communicate the findings.

No matter how you do your evaluation, try to interpret it with an NFE perspective. A Togolese Peace Corps training director put it this way:

"If after two years you have succeeded in empowering one person, then your project is a success. The success of a program should not be measured by statistics. The moment we understand that if we succeed with one or two individuals we have succeeded in the project, we begin to take our time. We work with people one by one."

LETTING GO AND MOVING ON

As Chris's group was doing their evaluation back in the village, Chris wondered if doing this just before his departure would give an air of finality to the project. That was the last thing he wanted. The whole point of his being there, he thought, was to be a catalyst, someone whose presence made things happen a little faster, a little more smoothly than they would have without him. After he left, the project and others like it should be able to continue without his involvement.

How could he have eased out of the group he was working with, he wondered? Probably he could have encouraged the natural leaders in the group to take over more and more of the planning of activities and the running of the meetings. He could have talked about his concerns with the group, telling them that he would like to take on more of a role of a support person, a consultant, and less of a leader because of his imminent departure. This did not mean that he cared less about the group...far from it. He would be staying in the background, participating less in discussions because of his vital interest in keeping the group alive.

"Well," thought Chris, "I didn't think of it in time. But I guess there are a lot of things I would do differently, now that I know a little more than when I began."

Chris is back home now, with his Peace Corps experience behind him. He sees the world with new eyes, both the developing world and his own society that he had left not so long ago. His old, comfortable assumptions have changed. Once he had not asked questions like "What do I really need in order to live well?" or "What am I going to do with the rest of my life?" Once he had been capable of giving easy, articulate definitions, but now, he groped and stumbled as he tried to reformulate them to fit his new reality. What is "education," he asked himself, or "development," or "communication," or the tough one -- "success?"

Chris did not know if his group's tree-planting project would ever really help people live more comfortable lives. Who knows if the trees they had planted in Togo would someday grow into a forest?

But one thing was sure, new seeds had been planted in his mind, with roots growing into his heart. He was changed forever because of what he had tried to do. But at the same time, he knew that what he had learned was something he had always believed in.

Go in search of the people
Love them
Learn from them
Plan with them
Serve them
Begin with what they have
Build on what they know

But of the best leaders
when their task is accomplished
their work is done
The People all remark
"We have done it ourselves"

- Lao Tse
Chinese philosopher of
the 16th century, B.C.
and author of legend
of the Tao Te Ching)

CHAPTER 7

SOME NFE TECHNIQUES FOR WORKING WITH GROUPS

- *What NFE activities will help break the ice and encourage group spirit?*
- *How can you write role plays that are relevant, fun and involving?*
- *How can formal classroom techniques such as lectures, demonstrations and panel discussions be adapted for NFE?*

IWTC
Anna S. Walker

While many of the techniques presented here are used with groups in fairly structured NFE situations, such as a training of trainers (p. 128) or a teacher training program, they can also be adapted for more unstructured, less formal group meetings. They are designed to involve participants in experiential learning activities, to relax them, to make them laugh, and to stimulate their creativity.

These techniques are only a sample of what you can do in working with groups. You might want to take a look at some of the resources in the reference section at the end of this manual to learn more.

* * * * * * * *

ICEBREAKERS: An _icebreaker_ is a short, structured activity designed to relax and energize participants and to introduce them to each other at the beginning of a program.

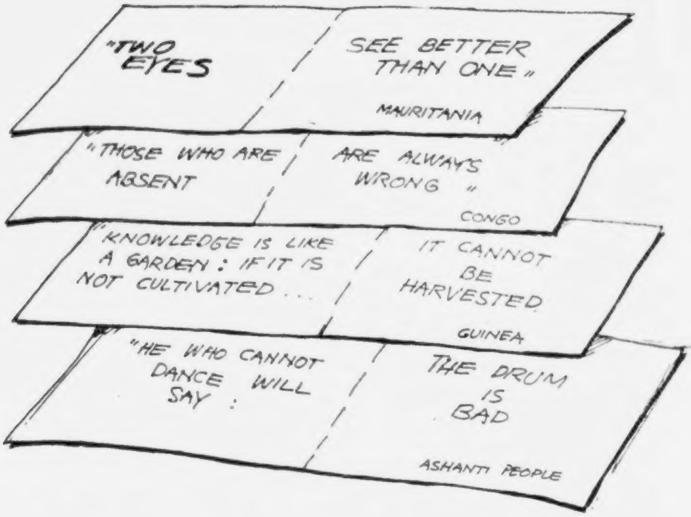
1. _Twenty Questions_. (Time: 10 minutes) The facilitator prepares a list of twenty questions, some serious, some amusing, and asks participants to stand if the answer applies to them.

> Examples: How many of you speak more than two languages? Have children? Have travelled more than 100 kilometers to get here? Know how to play a musical instrument? Have been teachers (or extension workers, etc.) for more than a year? More than 5 years? More than 10 years?

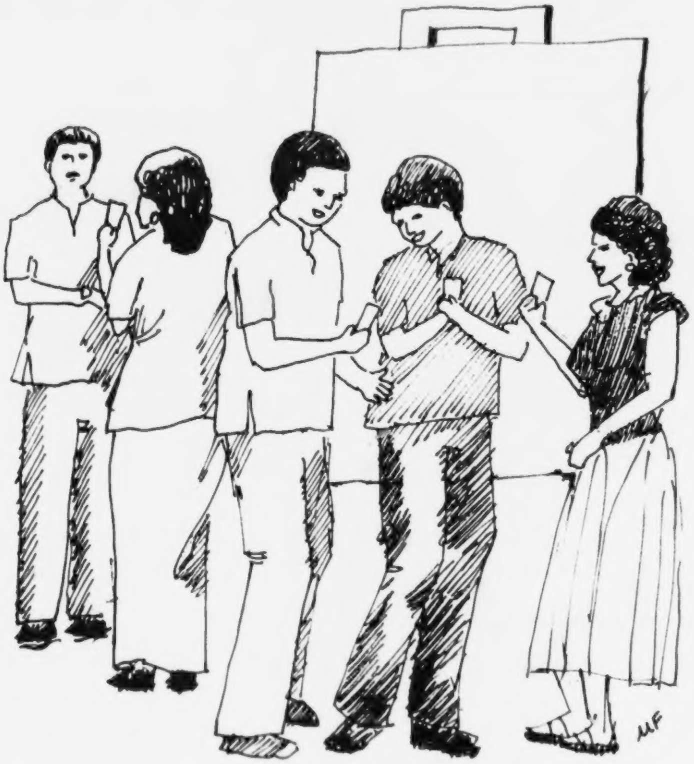
Participants will learn something about each other (and the facilitator) as well as become aware of the multitude of talents that exist in the group.

2. _Proverbs_. (Time: 30-40 minutes) With the help of a cultural guide, the facilitator writes some well-known local proverbs on slips of paper. The slips of paper are then cut in two, with half of a proverb on each slip. These are then handed out to participants with instructions to move around the room until they find the person with the other half of the proverb they have in their hand. When pairs meet, they are to introduce themselves and discuss the meaning of the proverb in the light of the workshop goals.

Examples of proverbs are on the next page.


"TWO EYES
SEE BETTER THAN ONE"
MAURITANIA
"THOSE WHO ARE ABSENT
ARE ALWAYS WRONG"
CONGO
"KNOWLEDGE IS LIKE A GARDEN: IF IT IS NOT CULTIVATED...
IT CANNOT BE HARVESTED
GUINEA
"HE WHO CANNOT DANCE WILL SAY:
THE DRUM IS BAD
ASHANTI PEOPLE

If you are working with a group with diverse literacy levels, the same activity can be conducted using two halves of a picture that must be matched, or two items that normally are found or used together; for example, a hammer and nail, a needle and thread, etc.



3. Group Introductions. (Time: 1 1/2 - 2 hours) Participants are divided into small groups and asked to spend about 20 minutes getting to know each other. Each group then prepares a short skit, song, dance or collective drawing that represents something special and significant about the small group as a whole. Then each small group presents their representation of themselves to the large group. Afterwards, some time should be spent discussing how the activity contributed to communication. The facilitator can summarize the activity by mentioning the range of interests and abilities that were revealed by the presentations.

WARM-UPS: A warm-up is like an icebreaker in that it relaxes and energizes participants, but it is used after everyone knows each other, usually at the start of a morning or afternoon training session.

1. Music. (Time: 10 minutes) If you play the guitar or other instrument, (or if a musically talented participant will agree to play) group members will enjoy singing a song or two of their own choice. You can also teach songs you know; old camp songs, folk songs, or simple pop tunes are fun and can add enormously to group spirit and enjoyment.

2. Traditional Warm-ups from the Participants' Culture: Ask some of the more outgoing participants to start the session in a traditional way, for example, with a joke or a story.

3. Warm-ups to make a point

* Telephone - (Importance of clear communication) (Time: 15 minutes). Play the game of telephone by handing one of the participants a short message written on a slip of paper. The participant should whisper the message to the person next in line, (no repetitions allowed) and that person in turn whispers the message until it gets all the way around the circle. The last person then repeats the message aloud.

The facilitator asks participants to come to some conclusions about communication in the light of the exercise.

* Brick Exercise (You're more creative than you think) (Time: 20 minutes). Put a brick or other familiar object on the table and ask the group to brainstorm all the things that they could do with it.

(paper weight? fulcrum for a see-saw? book end? paint? (powdered and mixed with water))

You can write the ideas on a blackboard or simply count the ideas until all suggestions have been exhausted. Ask participants why in their opinion they were able to come up with so many uses for the brick, and what that suggests about other group work they will do together.

* Team Building...No Talking! (Breaking down hierarchies) (Time: one hour) This exercise can be especially effective if you are working with a group of people who may be somewhat intimidated by the differences in status within the group.

Tell participants that they should move about the room and greet everyone without talking. Then each participant should choose a partner and communicate something to them, again without talking. Finally, each pair should join another pair and communicate silently as a group of four.

To process the experience the facilitator should ask participants their reactions and what they learned from it.

(from: Crone & St. John Hunter, From the Field: Tested Participatory Activities for Trainers)

ROLE PLAYS: A role play is a short skit created and acted out by the participants to simulate a real life situation that illustrates a problem or conflict.

You can use role plays to let participants practice new behavior they've learned, to experience new perspectives, or to come up with solutions to a common problem. You can make up a role play yourself or let participants create a dramatization of their own.

For example, an agriculture Volunteer might use a role play to get farmers talking about the danger of overusing pesticides and to encourage them to come up with some safety precautions themselves.

The facilitator meets with two of the participants beforehand, explains the role play and gets their reactions and ideas for playing the roles in an amusing or dramatic way.

The role play involves an agricultural extension agent who is explaining the use of pesticides, a farmer attending the lecture (and who later forgets the instructions) and a child who is inadvertently hurt by the miscommunication.

The facilitator and the participants practice the role play once or twice and then present it to the group. The facilitator then leads a discussion of what happened and asks participants for their suggestions about how the situation could be prevented in real life.

Role plays can be especially effective if you play one of the parts, as participants will really enjoy watching you reveal yourself as an actor. If you play the role sensitively and spontaneously they'll feel they've gotten to know you a little better, and this will make it easier for them to relate to you as a person. Some (but not all) of the participants may also enjoy playing roles or creating the role plays themselves, and their skills will add humor and poignancy to the scene they choose to represent.

The discussion that comes after a role play may also be quite fruitful because participants feel free to criticize the role and the characterization rather than the role players (or, by extension, themselves). By thinking of a hypothetical farmer as the one who botched the instructions, they can more easily come up with ways to ensure their own family's safety, instead of simply thinking of themselves as ignorant and incapable, as they might if they heard this information in a warning lecture or saw it on a poster.

Another way to use role plays is to divide the participants into small groups and give each a scene to develop themselves. Give them a time limit to prepare the role play, and make sure they have space and privacy, if necessary, to practice it. Each small group then presents their role play to the audience. You can then lead a discussion of the behavior portrayed or felt by the players and encourage participants to suggest ways of changing their own behavior or attitudes in a similar, real-life situation.

OPEN-ENDED PROBLEM DRAMA: An open-ended problem drama is like a role play in that it illustrates a problem or conflict familiar to participants, but it is left unresolved to stimulate discussion and critical thinking. It can be created by the facilitator or by a group, and, like the role play, may be acted out by participants alone or facilitator and participants together. It can be written in detail or simply discussed in outline, practiced and revised by participants who may have limited literacy skills.

Successful use of the open-ended problem drama depends on both good dramatic design and good processing of the experience afterwards. To create a good drama, keep these points in mind:

> * The problem drama should be based on a locally relevant anecdote or a situation depicting some familiar, poignant problem.
>
> *It should be left unresolved so that participants will have to supply their own interpretation and suggest possible resolutions of the situation.
>
> *The drama should depict a problem that occurs over a short period of time.
>
> * It should focus on one major point rather than encompassing several story threads.
>
> *It should contain believable characters -- not all good or all bad -- so that participants may side with more than one.
>
> *It should be genuinely controversial, allowing for more than one reasonable conclusion.
>
> (from Crone & St. John Hunter, From the Field: Tested Participatory Activities for Trainers)

Brief the players about their roles beforehand, giving them time to prepare, and allowing them to talk about how they felt about playing their parts before the observers discuss what they saw. Then encourage participants to interpret and suggest possible solutions to the drama.

CRITICAL INCIDENTS: A critical incident is a story-version of an open-ended problem drama that is followed by questions for discussion. It depicts a situation that has no clear solution but is meant to stimulate group discussion. It can be written for participants to read individually or in a group, or it can be told aloud, followed by participant discussion.

How to use a Critical Incident:

Suppose you are training a group of particularly effective preschool teachers to help you plan and carry out a toy-making workshop for other preschool teachers in your region. This kind of workshop is called training of trainers (or TOT), and its purpose is to give the trainers who will be working with you an understanding of how to really communicate with the teachers that will come to the toy-making workshop.

One of the issues that you've decided to address with your trainers is why many of the teachers seem depressed and apathetic about trying anything new. You don't want the trainers (who of course are teachers themselves) to simply condemn the teachers as lazy or uncreative. You want them to explore the problems of preschool teachers in some depth, to understand the stresses that they are under, and to verbalize what perhaps they themselves had been feeling all along. So you think of a situation that suggests a common conflict, preferably one from your own experience or the experience of a colleague, and write it in clear, simple language. Then write three or four questions for discussion that will help guide the participants' analysis of the situation.

Here is an example of a critical incident with questions for discussion:

> *A preschool teacher is surprised one day by a visit from the district inspector and a new Volunteer. As her classroom is completely empty, the teacher quickly sends the children playing in the yard to the primary school next door to borrow some chairs. She is trembling and seems quite frightened as she directs the children to set up the classroom.*
>
> *The Volunteer asks sympathetically if she has trouble getting supplies such as paper and paint for the children. The teacher agrees and begins to explain, but the inspector interrupts her, saying, "You're lying. You have a budget for supplies and you haven't bought anything." The teacher breaks into tears.*
>
> Questions:
>
> 1. Why in your opinion is the teacher so frightened?
> 2. What might be possible reasons that the teacher has no supplies or even furniture in her classroom?
> 3. Does the inspector have a point? What might prevent a teacher from using the budget that she has?

Ask your trainers to read the incident and the questions (which you have written on a roll-up blackboard beforehand; see page 148) and discuss the questions in small groups. It is not necessary that they come to a group consensus, though in some cultures they will prefer to do this. Be sure to give the participants the time they need to discuss the questions to their satisfaction. American groups would take about 20 minutes for such an exercise.

Now bring the small groups back together and ask one person from each group to report their answers to the large group. This may well lead to more discussion at the large group level. Your role here should be as facilitator, making sure that everyone has their say and refraining as much as possible from imposing your own opinion on the group.

After the large group discussion you may want to summarize the main points that have come out of the experience, perhaps listing them on another roll-up. These points may serve as the basis of future discussions or as things to remember when the trainers later begin to plan how to motivate the teachers to actually make changes in their schools under these difficult conditions. The entire exercise will take a good hour if you have succeeded in getting the participants really talking and considering the issues.

Critical incidents told aloud as problem stories can be very effective in stimulating discussion and problem-solving for groups with limited literacy. They are similar to the Story with a Gap described in Chapter 5.

DEMONSTRATIONS: A demonstration is a structured performance of an activity in order to show, rather than simply tell an audience how it is done.

A demonstration brings to life some information that you have presented in an explanation or discussion. It is essential to gather all your materials and practice the demonstration beforehand so that your audience is convinced it is easy enough to try themselves.

For example, a health Volunteer might explain to a group of villagers how important it is for a pregnant woman to sleep under a mosquito net to avoid infecting her unborn child with malaria. She then could demonstrate how to set up a mosquito net in a hut where everyone sleeps on the floor. Before the demonstration the Volunteer should try out various ways of attaching the net to the structural support posts inside the hut where the woman usually sleeps. When it comes time for the demonstration she could ask several members of the audience to help tie the net in place and then invite someone -- maybe a child -- to try out the new arrangement.

Before demonstrating a technique, be sure you have thought about its suitability for the people, customs, and economic constraints of the area. Since you are introducing something new it will naturally be looked on with skepticism at first. But if in addition you show your ignorance of the cultural context, you risk losing credibility for further NFE activities. For example, if mosquito nets are expensive or unavailable in your area, or if you assume that a pregnant woman sleeps with her husband (when she may or may not, depending on local custom), you might find yourself the object of amusement or politely ignored.

FIELD TRIPS: A field trip is an excursion to a site where participants can see a real life example of an activity or a situation that concerns them.

For example, a Volunteer working in small animal production might take a group to see how a local farmer has constructed rabbit cages in a particularly effective way, or someone working in carpentry could take the group to see a small furniture factory in another area, and later discuss the pros and cons of setting up one like it back home.

Field trips need to be planned carefully in advance, for if logistics do not go smoothly, if key people at the site are not informed about the purpose of the visit, or if the cultural context is not well understood, the resulting discomfort can detract from the learning that might otherwise have taken place.

It is best to structure the field trip so that participants know in advance that they should observe particular things or get answers to particular questions. Later discussion and processing of the experience (see page 31) will help participants analyze and generalize from the experience and consider its value for their own lives.

LECTURETTE: A lecturette is a short, oral presentation of facts or theory. Usually no more than fifteen minutes in length, a lecturette aims to impart information in a direct, highly organized fashion.

Although nonformal education seeks to avoid one-way transfer of learning, in certain circumstances, a formal presentation of necessary material will be appreciated by participants.

Ideally, participants who have determined their own needs (see Chapter 4), who have planned their learning together (Chapter 5), and who have considered the issues involved through critical incidents, role plays, or other experiential learning activities will ask that facts and theory be provided when they need it. In other words, when participants have determined what they need to know, they will be highly receptive to short lecture presentations by either the facilitator or an outside resource person.

On the other hand, groups who have had a great deal of schooling may be so used to formal education methods that they expect lectures to be the only method suited to transmitting "serious" information.

Experience has shown that when formally trained participants get involved in discussions and see that active, experiential learning is not only serious, but ultimately more useful to them, they will often change their minds about the methods they prefer. However, you need to remember that participants have different learning styles (see page 32). It is wise to plan presentations to use a variety of NFE methods so that participants' diverse learning styles are taken into account.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS: A panel discussion is a presentation of an issue by several resource people sitting rather formally at a table in front of an audience.

Usually, each presenter speaks briefly on the topic and then a moderator solicits questions from the audience. The moderator introduces the presenters, keeps the discussion on the topic and within time limits, and sums up the panel discussion at the end of the session.

An appropriate use of a panel discussion is to allow the group to question a number of people on their own experience doing what the group members will do in the future.

For example, a group of vegetable farmers were taking part in a workshop on new soil conservation methods. To encourage the farmers to try the methods, the Volunteers planned demonstration sessions and carried them out on a plot of communal land with the farmers watching. After the demonstration, the Volunteers hoped the farmers would adopt the new methods they had just observed.

However, the Volunteers felt that the farmers would need more orientation and encouragement on how and why to apply the new methods before they did it themselves. So they organized a panel discussion to encourage the farmers to ask questions about the methods they had seen demonstrated. Panel members included extension agents and farmers from nearby communities who already were using the new procedures. Participants were then able to get specific answers about the materials and labor needed and other problem areas before they tried to change some of the ways they farmed.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION: A small group discussion is a short, structured session in which three to five participants exchange opinions about a particular topic or accomplish a task together.

Usually the facilitator begins a session by briefly presenting a topic to the large group and then setting a clear task for small groups to accomplish. The facilitator then divides the group into smaller groups either by asking participants to count off ("all number ones go together," etc.) or simply by dividing the group into smaller clusters according to where people are sitting.

The task for small group discussion may be written on a blackboard, or given to participants as a handout, or, if instructions are simple, given verbally. Remember to announce the amount of time participants have to discuss the topic and tell them in advance what will be required of them after the discussion is over.

For example, each small group may be asked to choose a reporter to summarize the group's findings and explain them to the large group. If appropriate, each reporter can outline the results of the group discussion on flip-chart paper (or a roll-up blackboard, see page 138).

In facilitating small group work, remember to:

*** set a clear task that can be accomplished within the time limit**

*** make sure the task is interesting to participants and relevant to their learning goals**

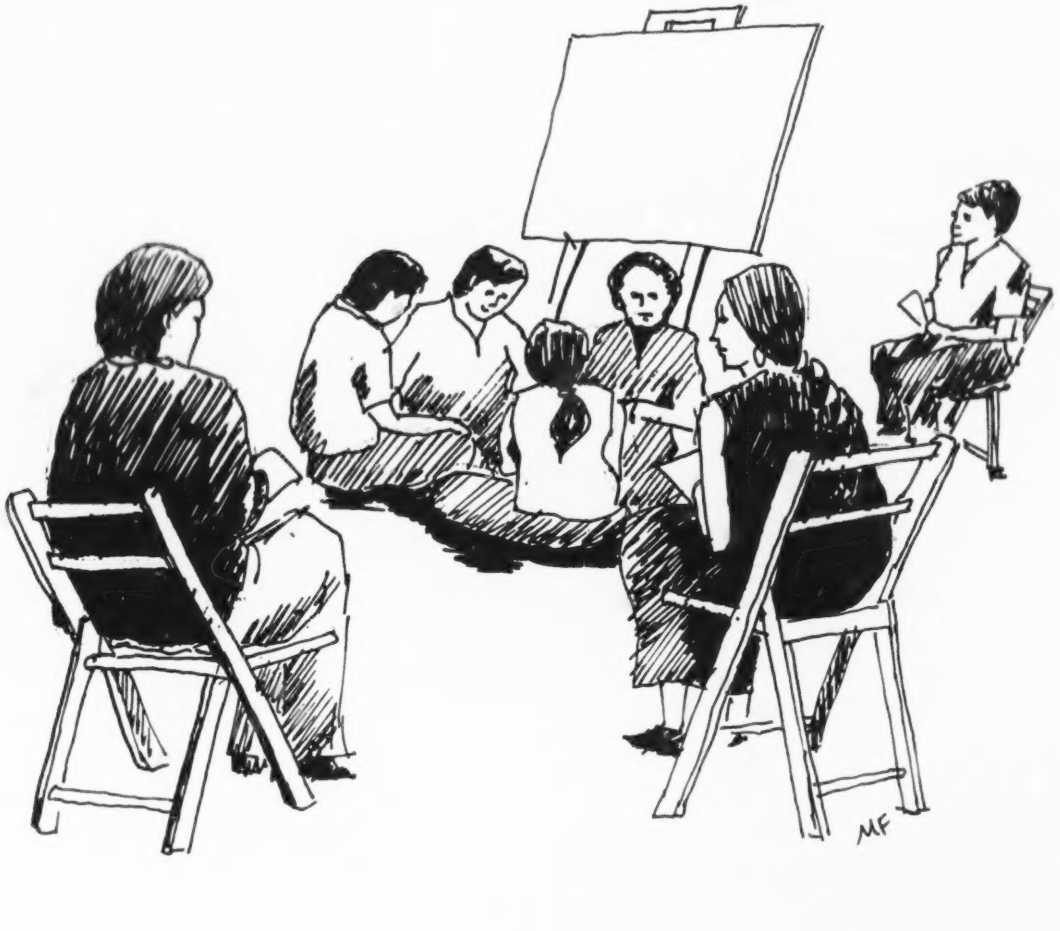
*** rehearse the instructions to participants in your mind beforehand to be sure you will cover everything necessary to make the task understandable**

WHEN SMALL GROUP WORK CAUSES CONFUSION AND GRUMBLING IT IS USUALLY BECAUSE INSTRUCTIONS WERE NOT CLEAR AND WELL-TIMED.

For examples of how to use small group discussions, please see "Critical Incidents" (page 121), "Group Introductions" (page 118) and "Team-building -- no talking!" (page 119). You might also use small groups to get maximum involvement of participants in discussing a role play (page 119) or in the first step of processing an experience such as a field trip (page 31).

After small groups have met, participants should reassemble as a large group and share their perceptions or recommendations together. This gives meaning to the small group experience and fosters acceptance of different points of view.

FISHBOWL: The fishbowl is a technique for structured observation of a group process. The group is divided in two, with half the group being the observers and the other half, active participants. The observers stand or sit in a circle around the active, inner group. Both groups are given specific tasks to do; the observers are asked to note specific behavior, while the active participants are asked to accomplish some task together.



For example, to study how people assume different roles in groups, the inner, active group was given the task of planning a small party to be held at the end of the next session. The observers had been briefed beforehand about what to observe: who took the role as leader, who didn't speak at all, who mainly gave encouragement, who argued or blocked the action, etc.

After fifteen minutes, the groups stopped what they were doing and the observers shared what they had found with the active participants. The two groups then switched places, with the observers becoming active participants and the inner group taking positions as observers. A new planning task was assigned to the inner group and the fishbowl exercise continued as before.

After the entire exercise was over, the facilitator led the group in processing of the experience (see page 30) to be sure that participants would apply whatever they learned about group behavior to their own experience.

TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT): A training of trainers workshop is a lengthy (usually one week or longer) experiential learning activity, the goal of which is to prepare the participants to act as facilitators of experiential learning.

Because a TOT aims to teach experientially, it should be structured to include many of the activities and techniques that the participants will later use to facilitate other groups.

It usually starts with an opening ceremony, followed by a needs assessment, and a goal setting exercise. A presentation of adult learning theory and the experiential learning cycle might come next, followed by opportunities to experience and practice the adult learning techniques (such as demonstrations, critical incidents, etc.) that are applicable to the training that the participants will be doing. Facilitators and outside presenters can then introduce content material, again, depending on the needs of the participants. Each day's session is followed by an evaluation, and the TOT workshop ends with a final, summative evaluation, a closing ceremony, and a party planned by participants with activities that follow local customs.

Even after a week-long TOT workshop, participants may need a good deal of support from the facilitators in planning and carrying out their own training program. This is why a TOT workshop should ideally be structured to occur just before a training workshop begins. The newly trained facilitators should have as much time to plan as possible, and should work with the original facilitators in presenting the sessions. As the facilitators become more comfortable in their new roles, the original facilitators can phase themselves out, finally acting only as observers during sessions and as resource people during the planning time.

TOT workshops are both exhausting and exhilarating because facilitators and participants work so closely together, planning, discussing, analyzing, supporting, critiquing, evaluating, sorting out problems and celebrating together.

Needless to say, the best way to learn to do a TOT or a training workshop is to work with experienced facilitators, or at least to act as a participant observer in other workshops to understand their overall design and the techniques that are most successful.

EVALUATION TECHNIQUES FOR SESSIONS, MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS

At the end of each nonformal education activity or session, spend fifteen minutes or so doing an evaluation. Since participants are often exhausted after a full day's work they will need the evaluation to be short, interesting to do, and varied in format.

Here are some possibilities:

EVALUATION CARDS: Hand out 3x5 cards to participants (or have them write on a scrap of paper) the answers to these open-ended questions:

I really liked...
I'm still confused about...
I hope...

FEELINGS: Draw a series of three faces on large envelopes one with an unhappy face, one with a confused face and the last with a smiling face. Hang the envelopes on the wall. Ask participants to place a slip of paper or some other type of counter in the envelope that best shows how they feel about the previous activity, the session thus far, or whatever you wish to evaluate. Leave the room while participants individually place their slips of paper in the envelopes. When you return, count the slips in each envelope aloud, and ask for information about why they felt satisfied, confused or unhappy.

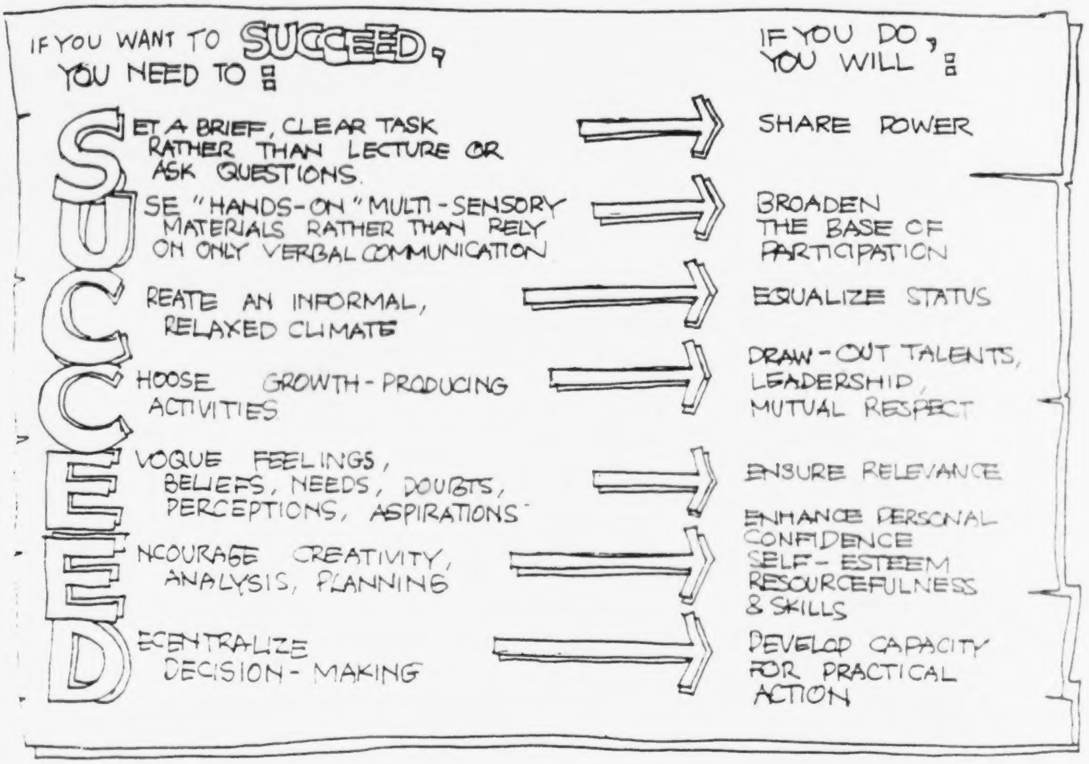
"HOW TO" EVALUATION: This type of evaluation is longer than the previous two examples. It is both formative (mid-program, for adjustments to participants' needs) and summative (end-of program, for determining if objectives have been met).

Divide the blackboard or flip chart paper into two columns and label them "Strengths" and "Problems to be Solved." Ask participants to brainstorm both the good things about the program and the things that need improvement. These problems to be solved should be expressed by a "how to" statement, in other words, "how to provide hot food at lunch time" or "how to provide partcipants with written materials before the session begins.'

Although participants may need help at first with this kind of phrasing, they will soon develop a knack for it and discover that they have started to suggest their own ideas for how these problems can be solved. Such an evaluation focuses on solutions instead of simply airing dissatisfaction with the program, which increases participants' sense of responsibility for the activity and is easier on the facilitators' feelings, as well.

GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING PARTICIPATORY PROGRAMS:

Lyra Srinivasen, a trainer with long experience in the field, suggests how to SUCCEED in planning NFE programs.

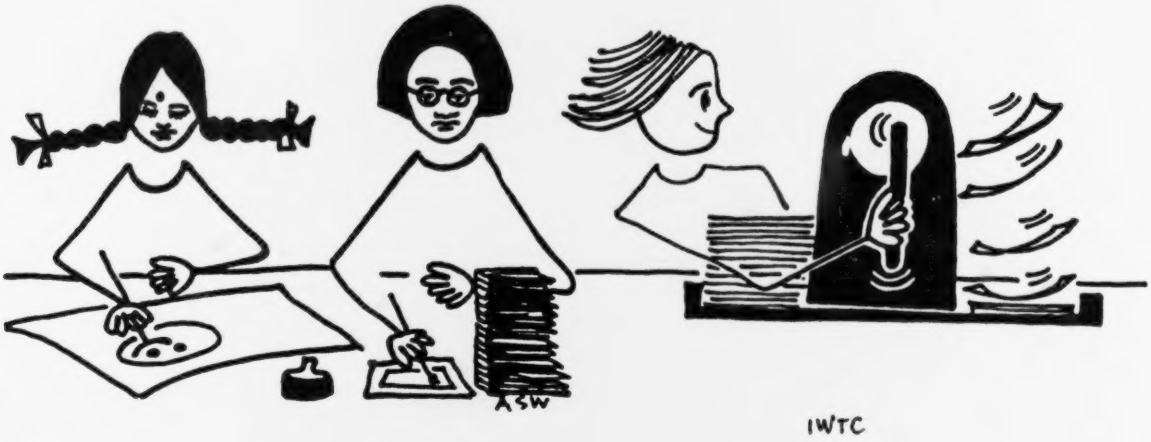


IF YOU WANT TO SUCCEED, YOU NEED TO:	IF YOU DO, YOU WILL:
SET A BRIEF, CLEAR TASK RATHER THAN LECTURE OR ASK QUESTIONS.	SHARE POWER
USE "HANDS-ON" MULTI-SENSORY MATERIALS RATHER THAN RELY ON ONLY VERBAL COMMUNICATION	BROADEN THE BASE OF PARTICIPATION
CREATE AN INFORMAL, RELAXED CLIMATE	EQUALIZE STATUS
CHOOSE GROWTH-PRODUCING ACTIVITIES	DRAW-OUT TALENTS, LEADERSHIP, MUTUAL RESPECT
EVOQUE FEELINGS, BELIEFS, NEEDS, DOUBTS, PERCEPTIONS, ASPIRATIONS	ENSURE RELEVANCE
ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY, ANALYSIS, PLANNING	ENHANCE PERSONAL CONFIDENCE SELF-ESTEEM RESOURCEFULNESS & SKILLS
DECENTRALIZE DECISION-MAKING	DEVELOP CAPACITY FOR PRACTICAL ACTION

CHAPTER 8

DEVELOPING NFE MATERIALS FROM LOCAL RESOURCES

- *What kinds of NFE materials can be made from local resources at very low cost?*
- *How can these materials be used to make your work in NFE more effective?*



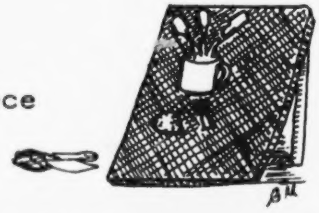
Even if your group has little money for NFE materials, they can make the basic tools for planning, group learning, and spreading the word to others from whatever inexpensive or free items that are locally available. The materials included in this chapter have been used effectively in the field by Volunteers. However, local people may show you more clever techniques than we have included here. They will know exactly what leaves, barks, clays, woods and local fabrics are appropriate for your group's materials development project.

Flannel Board

Description and Use: The flannel board consists of a rough-surfaced material attached to a board that serves as a background cloth for drawings, pictures, symbols, and captions. The display materials, backed with another rough surfaced material, adhere to the background with slight pressure and can easily be removed or rearranged on the flannel board. Flannel boards are easy to transport and store. Village groups find them particularly interesting for planning and displaying ideas in picture form.

Flannel Board Construction

Materials: a large sheet of plywood or heavy cardboard, a larger piece of flannel or rough cloth.



Procedure:

1. Take a large piece of wood or heavy cardboard (people will have difficulty seeing a small display from a distance) and cover entire board with flannel, blanket, or other rough cloth (note: the rougher the cloth used the better the board will work; smooth cloth may also be used if the surface is roughened with sandpaper).

2. Fasten the cloth to the board using tape, staples, tacks, or glue while running your hand across the cloth to create a smooth surface.

Suggestions: Black, green, or grey color cloth are the most appropriate background colors and will offer good contrast. If a board is not available, the cloth may be draped over a portable chalkboard.

Alternative Constructions

Elastic-backed cloth: Fasten elastic strips to the cloth so that it fits tightly around the board. This allows the cloth to be easily removed for storage.

Cloth bag flannel board: A two-sided cloth board can be made by sewing two pieces of cloth together in the form of a bag. You can use two different colors of cloth for a choice of background colors. To use, insert plywood, a chalkboard or heavy cardboard into the bag and pin the open end in place. Store display materials in the bag between uses.

Construction of Display Materials

Choose and cut out whatever materials you want to display: pictures, graphs, charts, etc. Cut-outs should be large so that the audience can see them clearly. Simple, brightly colored displays are more visually effective than complicated, detailed pictures. Lettering should be bold. Figures in a story, for example, should be in proportion to each other, larger in the foreground, smaller in the background. Cut-outs and displays must be flat and rigid. Glue thin pictures or drawings onto cardboard and apply the backing material directly to the cardboard. Use sandpaper (in narrow strips) or rough cloth (over entire area) as backing materials. The display materials should adhere easily to the flannel board when they are pressed firmly against it. Materials will stay in place better if the board is tipped slightly backward against a wall, chalkboard or easel.

Making Sandpaper

If sandpaper is not available, home-made sandpaper can be easily produced. Spread a thin layer of glue on cardboard, then sprinkle on a light covering of sand. Allow to dry and shake off excess sand.

Community Bulletin Board and Newsheets

Description and Use: A community bulletin board, placed in a strategic location, can be an effective way to encourage reading and keep people up to date on program and community news. Anything that can hold papers and be easily rearranged can serve as a bulletin board. Items can be hand written and changed every day.

Use the board to challenge interaction: invite people to write short letters and respond to each other or post a local newspaper and encourage contributions. Use your community bulletin board for any one of the four traditional purposes: to inform, to motivate, to instruct, or simply to decorate.

In general, bulletin boards are used because they are inexpensive and can be homemade from local materials and can be easily changed. In a classroom setting they provide visual stimulation to the learning environment and a focal point for learner participation and discussion. If you make them large and mobile, you can even use a bulletin board to divide your learning space for small group work and variety.

A modest mimeographed newsheet can keep people posted on upcoming events (see section on hand press duplicators for production ideas). A newsheet need be no more than a couple of pages and come out once a month or so. Invite people in the community (including children) to contribute articles and announcements. Encouraging participants to run a newspaper can build pride and a sense of community. Moreover, in areas where there are few books, a newsheet gives people a chance to practice, and thus retain, their literacy skills.

Bulletin Board Construction

Materials: A large piece of wood, cardboard, matting, etc.; paint or cloth (to accent or cover); fasteners (pins, thumbtacks, wire clips, etc.).

Procedure:

1. Paint the board a bright color or cover it with a bright solid color material.

2. Fasten the bulletin board to a wall or stand it on an easel somewhere where it can be seen but not easily knocked over.

3. Organize the display materials and attach them in a clear and interesting fashion.

Suggestions: Many everyday materials can be turned into bulletin boards at little or no cost. A piece of cardboard carton, wooden boxes, heavy cloth material, heavy wrapping paper, woven mats or other low cost materials make excellent display areas. You can also cover part of the chalkboard with flannel or use the back of a door. A wire, strong cord, or even a slim bamboo pole stretched over part of a community room or through tree branches makes a functional bulletin board when materials are clipped to it.

Chalkboard

Description and Use: The chalkboard is a useful tool for any educational activity. It is easily used and reused and can be made large for facilitators or small enough for use by individual group members, especially where paper is less abundant. To use a chalkboard effectively:

- * Print or write large.
- * Face the group as much as possible, do not talk to the board.
- * Do not fill the board with irrelevant material.
- * Use the board to emphasize the important points by: drawing pictures, maps, diagrams or writing difficult words, lists, summaries, discussion questions etc. (being especially sensitive to the literacy level of your audience).
- * Use the board to jot down ideas from a community discussion.
- * Make sure participants understand what you have put on the board and why.
- * Clean the board often (unless there is something you want saved for future reference).

Encourage everyone to make use of the board. Group members can outline reports to be compared, summarize group discussions, or draw pictures to illustrate a point. A more literate participant can act as a secretary to write down the important points of a group discussion or a story as it is created. The facilitator can then sit back and observe or actively participate as needed.

Chalkboard Construction

Materials: Piece of blockboard, plywood, or pieces of planks joined together; black paint or chalkboard paint (see below); sandpaper; chalk and cloth or eraser

Procedure:

1. Sand main board material carefully to an even roughness.

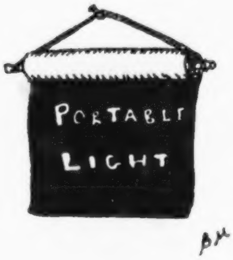
2. Apply two separate coats of black paint to roughened surface. Be sure the first coat of paint is dry before applying second coat.

3. Before using the chalkboard, rub a chalk-dusty eraser or cloth over it (this is necessary to create an erasable surface).

Suggestion: Attaching a good wooden frame to the board will help prevent warping and make the chalkboard last longer.

Alternative Construction - Roll-up Blackboard

This is a portable blackboard that is light, easy to carry and can be used with small groups.



Materials: canvas (55 x 74 cm); round wooden pole or stick; black paint.

Procedure:

1. Apply two coats of chalkboard paint or black paint, allowing first coat to dry thoroughly before applying second coat.

2. When paint is dry, fix a round, smooth wooden rod or pole to the long end of the painted cloth.

3. Connect both ends of the rod with a piece of cord or string so that you can hang it on a nail.

4. When rolling up the chalkboard, roll the painted side in, keeping the unfinished surface on the outside.

Suggestions: If canvas is not available, use a smooth, thick piece of cotton cloth or old blanket. Give the cloth a very thin coat of carpenter's glue on one side. When glue is dry, apply two coats of paint as above. Make a sturdier version of this chalkboard by attaching poles to both ends of the canvas and making two vertical support poles that, when placed between the top and bottom pole, stretch the canvas and create a firm writing surface.

Chalkboard Paint

Materials:
1 part soot or powdered charcoal;
1 part varnish;
1 1/2 parts of kerosene or paraffin.

Procedure:

1. Mix varnish and paraffin thoroughly.

2 Blend mixture thoroughly with soot or powdered charcoal.

3. Apply two coats of paint to prepared surface as described above.

Chalk

Materials: 1 part chalky soil or lime powder; 4 parts water.

Procedure:

1. Place chalky soil in a large basin or bucket.

2. Add water and stir vigorously. Crumble large pieces and dissolve soil as much as possible. Ignore hard rocks or pebbles.

3. Allow soil to settle overnight.

4. Pour water off the top and skim off top layer of silt (this is usually several inches thick). The top layer you have just skimmed off is chalk in a liquid state.

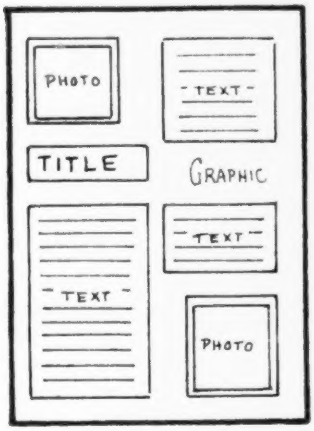
5. Put "chalk" in a bag of muslin or similar coarse, porous cloth and let it drip overnight. To speed process, the water may be squeezed out.

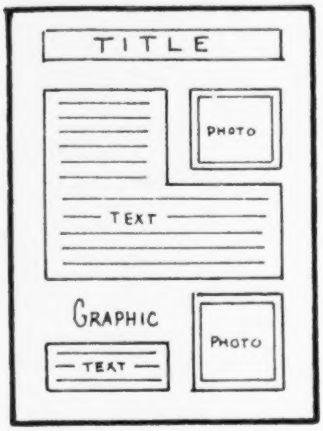
6. Roll chalk (which should now look like clay or bread dough) into long, snake-like pieces. Cut to desired lengths and let dry. Or split a reed stalk and use it as a chalk mold.

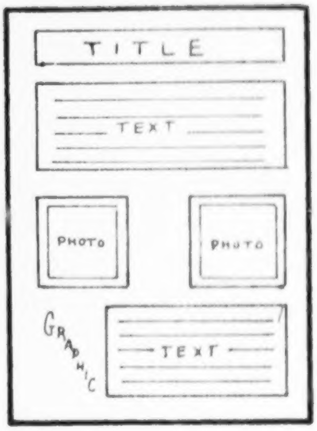
Suggestions: Thicker chalk will not break as easily. To make colored chalk, add dye (see page 147) in step 2 above.

Layout

Layout refers to the arrangement and placement of materials within a defined area. It is one of the most important factors in a successful bulletin board, poster, newsheet, or any graphic medium. In general, you should balance the presentation of text and illustration so that the end result is easy to read and pleasing to look at. The final decision as to how to lay out a given page, poster or board will generally depend on what is most pleasing to the individual's eyes. The illustrations on the following page depict the same items laid out in three different ways.







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Posters

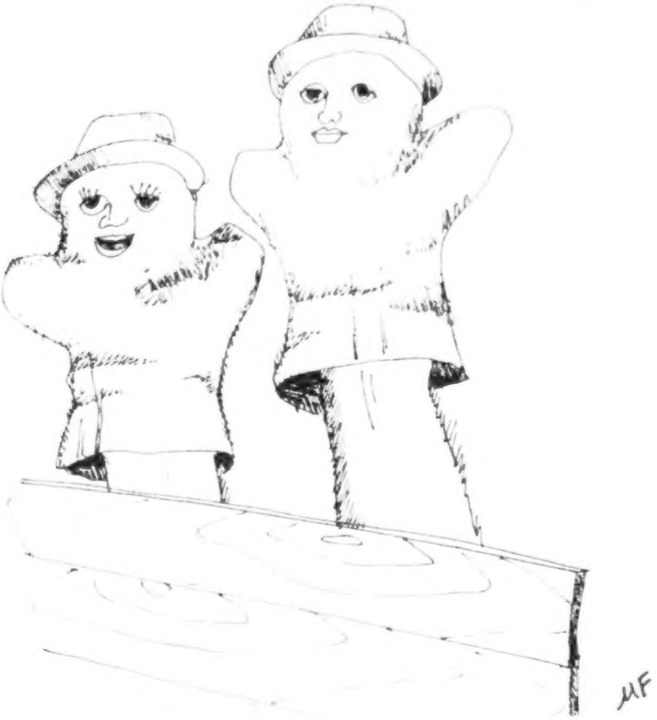
Description and Use: *A good poster should catch and hold an individual's attention long enough to communicate a brief message. To be effective, posters must be colorful and dynamic. If your message is clear and catchy, a poster can be an inexpensive and easily produced method of communication.*

A poster was first used as a means of advertising over one hundred years ago to promote theatrical productions. Since that time, five key aspects of poster production have emerged. An effective poster is simple, has a single theme or topic, contains a concise, well-phrased message, and uses large bold letters and eye-catching colors. Good posters do not just happen, they are carefully planned. Posters rely on a symbol that expresses a particular set of ideas and is appropriate to the cultural and social context. The actual size of the poster, the lettering, and the coloring will all be influenced by where the poster is to be displayed.

Understanding how to use colors in posters is extremely important. Purple is the least visible color (by itself) while yellow has twelve times the visibility of purple. Orange, green, red, and blue are all roughly three times more visible than purple. Ultimately, complementary colors and contrasting shades create contrast and provide the most striking visual results. If, for example, you wish to create a poster to be viewed from a great distance, then you would use dark blue (or even dark purple) on a white background since this would result in the most visible lettering. Black on yellow, green on white, blue on white, green or red on yellow and red on white are also appropriate color combinations for distance viewing. (For general ***Layout*** *information, see the section above.)*

Puppets

Description and Use: The use of puppets is a well tried and valuable NFE technique. Puppets can take various forms, from hand puppets, to stick puppets, to marionettes. A puppet can be made to represent a character, a value, or a type of individual.



Cloth and Envelope Hand Puppets

Materials: old socks, shirt sleeves, used envelopes, yarn, cornsilk, buttons, paint, glue, etc.

Procedure:

1. Draw, paint, glue or sew a face on one side of the cloth or envelope. Make the eyes a prominent feature. (Shape the envelope around the top edges of the face by folding and gluing the corners.)

2. Attach grass, cornsilk, strands of wool, yarn or rolled paper to serve as hair around the face, in back, and for a moustache or beard if desired.

3. Put the puppet head on one hand. You can use a rubber band or piece of string to secure it around the wrist.
4. Use the puppets by hiding behind a cupboard, a desk, a large box or a fence. Then let the characters of the puppets take over.

Paper Maché Puppets:

Materials: paper strips, paste, paint, etc.

Procedure:

1. Wrap a piece of dry paper around your index finger to make a cone and paste it together.

2. Crumple a ball of dry paper and place it on the top of the cone.

3. Attach the ball to the cone using paper maché strips (see recipe for paper maché below), continuing until you have formed a secure, smooth surface.

4. Build up this surface with more strips to form features - ears, lips, nose, eyebrows.

5. When it dries, paint it.

6. Cut a dress or shirt from an old scrap of cloth and sew it onto the head.

7. Bring the puppet to life by inserting your index finger in the hollow cone and using thumb and pinky as "hands." Use a desk, table or large box for the stage.

Suggestions: In many cultures, puppets have found a place in the festivities and leisure life of the community. Explore local techniques of puppet construction or invite a puppeteer to lead a construction session with participants.

Paste and Paper Maché

Description and Use: The following mixtures are locally produced adhesives that can be used to fix paper and cloth items together, form maps or models, or otherwise help to create NFE support materials.

Paste

Flour Paste: from commercial wheat or cassava flour and water

1. Remove all lumps from the flour by sifting it through a wire sieve.
2. Add water as needed to the flour to form a smooth paste.

Rice Paste: from handful of rice and water

1. Cook rice in water as usual until rice is moist and sticky. Do not allow rice to become dry.

2. Allow to cool and drain off any excess water.

3. Use the sticky rice as a paste, pressing out lumps with your finger as you apply it.

Cassava Paste: from 4 medium cassavas and cold water

1. Peel, wash and grate cassavas.

2. Add cold water, soak, and strain into another container. Squeeze out all liquid.

3. Let stand for one hour. Starch will settle to the bottom of the container.

4. Pour off liquid, scrape starch from the bottom of the container and set it in the sun to dry.

5. To make paste, mix some starch with cold water until quite thick. Next, add boiling water, stirring constantly, until it reaches the desired consistency for paste.

Paper Maché

Materials: newspaper or old thin paper stock and a paste mixture from above.

Procedures:

Sheet method: Soak a sheet of newspaper in a thin mixture of paste. When it is soft and pliable, lay it over the form to be covered. Let dry. Place at least six layers around a balloon or round object to make a ball. This is the best method for making large objects.

Pulp method: Tear newspaper into small pieces and soak these in water until they form a pulpy mass. Drain off the water and mix the paper thoroughly with thin paste. Apply by handfuls to the form to be covered. (Good for models, maps, etc.)

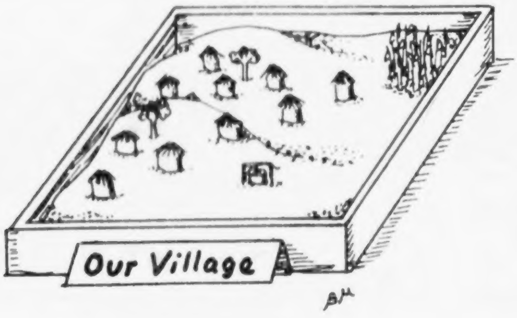
Strip method: Tear off thin strips of newspaper and soak them in thin paste until they are soft and pliable. Apply in criss-cross layers. This is the best method for making puppets and animals

Models: Dioramas, Sand Tables and Salt Maps

Description and Use: Models are three-dimensional representations of reality. A model may be larger, smaller, or the same size as the object it represents. It may be complete in detail or simplified for instructional purposes. Your group can use a model as an aid when discussing a situational analysis, trying to map out potential locations of latrines, or practicing construction of mud stoves on a small scale.

If you are using a model for instructional purposes, familiarize yourself with it before you begin. Practice your presentation. If your model is a working one, be sure you know how it works. Be sure your audience does not get the wrong impression of the size, shape, or color of the real object if the model differs from it in these respects. Whenever feasible, encourage your audience to handle and manipulate the model.

Dioramas: A diorama is an open-sided box with flat background and trees, houses and ground constructed of paper or cardboard, painted and positioned in the box to present a three-dimensional display. It is a model that highlights features of a place, a particular scene, or village.



Sand Table: The sand table is exactly what the name implies: a table, or a floor in a corner of a room, with built up sides that contains sand or similar materials that can be molded to depict a particular scene. Small models can be created and easily moved from one spot to another on the sand table. The sand table has an advantage in that the sand can be smoothed out and used over and over again.

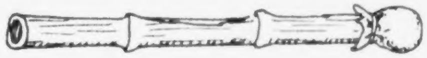
Salt Map: Similar to the sand table, but more permanent. The salt mixture can be molded into a rigid surface which can be painted, labeled and preserved over a long period of time. The ingredients of the salt map are: one cup flour, one cup salt and one-half cup water. When these ingredients are thoroughly mixed together they form a substance that can be molded, and when left to dry will harden. Salt maps have an unusual advantage in that they can be hung up when dry, providing three-dimensional pictures.

Pens and Paintbrushes

Description and Use: Pens, paintbrushes and markers can be made from a variety of indigenous materials. Sturdy, effective, and easily made, locally produced pens and brushes dipped in homemade dyes and inks can take the place of store-bought equivalents. Making your own writing implements can prove particularly important in areas where even the price of a pencil is a barrier to group participation.

Pen Construction

Materials: Thin, hollow bamboo is recommended for pen construction (large bamboo staffs will not work).



Pen Types and Procedures:

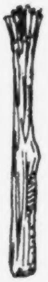
1. **Bamboo Marker**: Choose a 10 cm stick of bamboo (with an inside diameter approximately the same size as the desired line width), a wad of cotton (or any highly absorbent material), and small piece of loose-weave muslin. Compress cotton tightly and cover with muslin. Stuff into end of bamboo. Dip the cotton pen tip into an ink or dye and allow a reasonable amount to be absorbed. Wipe off excess and use it as you would a felt pen or magic marker. As the written image begins to lighten, dip the marker periodically in the ink or dye.

2. **Flat Stick Pen**: For making letters you can wrap a small piece of felt over the end of a flat stick such as a tongue depressor and secure tightly with an elastic band. Dip into ink and begin lettering. This is good for drawing large and wide lines.

3. **Bamboo Lettering Pen:** Select a 12 cm stick of bamboo cane and use a knife or razor blade to carve an excellent lettering pen (as shown in the drawing). Be sure that the end is flat and even in thickness as this will affect the lettering you produce. Dip the pen in the ink periodically as you write.

Paint Brush Construction

Stick Brushes:



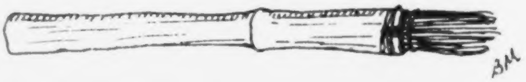
** Select or cut a six inch length of rattan or a dried reed-like plant. Mark it about one-half inch from one end and pound this section to form bristles.

** Use chew-sticks (used as a dental hygiene tool in many places) as cheap disposable brushes.

** Select bamboo sections, soak and chew the ends to make brushes for writing and painting.

Loose-Fiber Brushes:

Materials:	Several large chicken or bird feathers tied together and trimmed to an appropriate length, or hair, string, fine grass, sisal fibers, etc.; gum or latex; bamboo or grooved stick; string or plaiting cotton.



Procedure:

1. Clean materials and gather them into small bundles according to how thick you want to make your brushes. Tie the materials firmly and cut level at the bottom.

2. Dip the level end in a waterproof gum or latex from a plant (such as a euphorbia hedge) or other source.

3. Stick the gummed end into a split bamboo, cut and grooved stick or onto a grooved bevelled stick. (It is better to fit the brush "in" something rather than "on" it. Bamboo is ideal for this purpose.)

4. The brush should be tightly bound onto or into the handle. Hair plaiting cotton or other small flexible fibers are ideal for this stage. A small amount of gum or latex over the binding will help to keep it from coming undone.

Inks, Dyes and Paints

Description and Use: The roots, leaves, barks, seeds and fruit of many plants and trees have been used for centuries to make colorants for crafts produced all over the world. These have been added to fixatives obtained from the gums of trees or made with starchy vegetables like maize or cassava flour. By following these age-old techniques, you can identify appropriate and readily available materials for making your own dyes, paints and inks.

Ink

Materials: 22 cc. alcohol (or methylated spirit); 14 cc. water; 2 grams dry or powdered dye (of any color).

Procedure: Add all ingredients and stir well.

Dyes

Procedure:

1. Select a colorful plant leaf, bark, flower or seed.
2. Pound it well.
3. If color seems weak or plant produces little juice, add a bit of water, boil and let sit overnight.
4. Crush and press through cloth to strain.

Suggestion: Add a small amount of vinegar to help "fix" the dye when used.

Paints (Example: Cassava Finger Paint)

Materials:

1 cup of cassava starch
5 cups of water
1/2 to 1 cup of soap flakes (optional)
color - made from leaves, bark, berries, foods, or crushed stone

Procedure:

1. Stir a little hot water into starch to remove lumps.

2. Add 5 cups of water to the smooth starch mixture and heat until clear and thick. Add soap flakes, if desired, and stir.

3. Stir in color. If more than one color is desired, separate mixture into several jars and add a different color to each jar.

Modeling Clay

Eight Ways of Making Modeling Clay

1. 1 cup flour, 1 cup salt, and 1/2 cup water. Mix until you get a modeling consistency.

2. Shred newspapers or paper towels. Mix with starch and any paste and knead thoroughly.

3. Mix cassava paste and sawdust. Add a little water if too dry.

4. Dissolve 250 ml of starch paste in water to thin slightly. Add 375 ml of plaster, 500 ml of sawdust, and knead to consistency of tough dough.

5. Soak small pieces of newspaper in bucket of water overnight. Remove from water and rub wet paper between palms of hands until it is ground to a pulp. Mix 1 ml of glue in 250 ml of water and add 500 ml of this paste to 1 litre of the wet paper pulp. Knead to a doughy consistency.

6. Mix 250 ml of dry clay powder sifted through a screen with 5 ml of glue dissolved in 250 ml of water: add wet paper pulp and knead to a doughy consistency (add water as necessary).

7. Powder mud from an ant hill or termite mound and mix with water. (When collecting the mud, watch out for rats and snakes that often inhabit old termite mounds.)

8. Check to see if clay is available in your locality. You may only need to dig a bit.

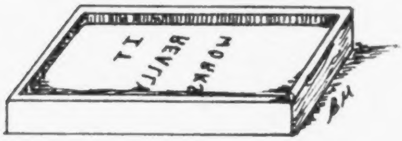
Hand Press Duplicators

Description and Use: Hand press duplicators are simple, non-mechanized devices used to reproduce written and graphic images. The simplest is the hectograph which uses a gelatin pad to store an ink image and can transfer this image to paper up to 30 times. The mimeograph board produces a larger number of copies using store-bought stencils and ink, but requires no machinery or electricity to operate. The most versatile of these techniques is the silk screen press. Also referred to as a nylon duplicator or a limograph, this printing technique allows workbooks, newsheets, large posters, game boards, flags, shirts and other items to be produced in large quantities on different types of materials.

Hectograph

Materials: a flat pan, cookie sheet or wooden box (slightly larger than the paper to be used); ingredients from one of the four formulas listed (choose according to availability).

Formula 1	Formula 2	Formula 3	Formula 4
one box of gelatin one pint of glycerin	1 part fish or animal glue (broken and soaked for 2 hours) 2 parts water 4 parts glycerin	glue (12 grams) gelatin (2 grams) water (7 1/2 grams) sugar (2 grams)	gelatin (10 grams) sugar (40 grams) glycerin (120 grams) barium sulfate (8 grams)



Procedure:

1. Choose a formula from above. If a glue-based formula is used, let the glue sit broken in the water for 2 hours and then heat the mixture (in a can or pot) over or in a pot of boiling water until the glue is dissolved.

2. Add other ingredients and heat for 15 minutes (7 minutes for formula 1, and skim any scum off the surface), stirring occasionally.

3. Pour this mixture into a flat shallow pan (straining it through a loosely woven cloth will eliminate any dirt particles) and allow it to sit for a few hours (24 for formula 1).

4. Once the transfer pad is ready, write your message, newsheet or drawing with ink (see formula above) onto a sheet of good quality paper (if the paper and pad are working right, you can sometimes use a ball point pen for this part).

5. Use a slightly damp sponge or rag to dampen the entire surface of the transfer pad.

6. Place the paper, ink side down, on the transfer pad. Smooth it down and leave for 4 to 6 minutes.

7. Carefully remove the paper master and the ink will have transferred to the pad. Smooth a clean sheet of paper over the image and allow 5 to 10 seconds for the transfer (allow more time for transfer as additional copies are made.

8. When finished, wipe the surface with a damp cloth/sponge and cover with paper. The remaining ink will transfer or be absorbed by the gelatin and the pad can be reused the next day.

Note: The gelatin compound can be recooked and recast to destroy old images or blemishes on the pad.

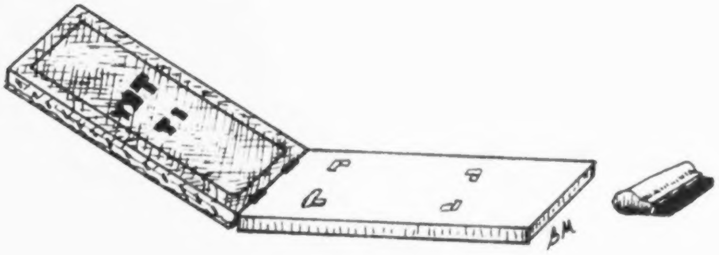
Mimeograph Board

Materials: Plywood or side of wooden box; cotton cloth; strong tape or thumb tacks; mimeograph ink and stencils; paper; a smooth bottle or rolling pin.

Procedure:

1. Cut plank board, side of box or section of crate to the size of a large stencil (14 x 18 inches).
2. Fasten 3 or 4 layers of cotton cloth to the face of the board. Make sure the cloth is smooth and tightly fastened.
3. Ink the board with mimeograph ink.
4. Place stencil (prepared by cutting words and images with ball point pen or typewriter) upside down on board.
5. Cover with plain paper and roll once with bottle or rolling pin.
6. Lift paper and repeat step 5 for as many copies as required (re-ink as necessary).

Silk Screen Press



Materials: A wooden frame (slightly larger than the area to be printed) hinged to a flat or framed rigid surface; Fine mesh material (silk, nylon); Stencil (purchased or hand-cut); Tape (masking or paper); Squeegee (block of wood with rubber attached to edge); Paint or thick ink.

Procedure:

1. Make a wooden frame slightly larger than a duplicating stencil or printing area.
2. Cut a board slightly larger than the frame and attach the frame to this base with hinges.

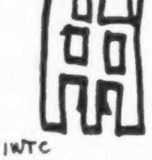
3. Cover the frame with silk or a nylon cloth tightly stretched and attach it securely.

4. Lay duplicating paper on the base and attach stencil to nylon on frame. Use tape to mask edges.

5. Spread ink or paint on screen with a squeegee -- made from a narrow block of wood slightly shorter than the width of the frame, with plastic or rubber attached to the edge. Lay screen frame on duplicating paper and run squeegee back and forth several times.

6. Lift frame and remove paper.

7. Repeat as often as desired.



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